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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this evaluation of citizenship educational services in Illinois is to: (1) document an historic coming together of stakeholders to make available generous funding for citizenship educational services from public and private sources; (2) describe the kinds of programming and technical assistance made possible through this funding; (3) assess the quality of citizenship education programming and technical assistance, highlighting both successes and issues of concern; and (4) make recommendations to address issues raised by the study. The evaluation period extended from April 1999 to March 2000. Multiple methods were used to obtain information. The project kicked off with a meeting of the advisory panel. Information from this meeting helped in the development of the survey that went out to 39 citizenship education programs. Thirty-eight responses were received. Interviews with program administrators were conducted and classroom observations were carried out. (Adjunct ERIC Clearinghouse for ESL Literacy Education) (Author/VWL)

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CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION IN ILLINOIS: **WHAT WORKS?**

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Funded under a grant from the Illinois
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Adult Learning Resource Center

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Introduction

Within days of the passage of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (commonly known as the welfare reform law) on August 22, 1996, thousands of immigrants desperately sought help in learning English and civics for the mandatory citizenship exam. For many immigrants, maintenance of their benefits depended on their ability to pass this test. That same year, two other laws passed that curtailed rights immigrants had long taken for granted. In most parts of the country, it took a year or more for service providers to be able to approach meeting the educational needs of hundreds of thousands of desperate immigrants who required citizenship to retain federal benefits such as Food Stamps.

On this date in Illinois, home to one of the largest immigrant populations in the U.S., things looked quite different. State government had already allocated and disseminated nearly two million dollars for citizenship education and application services through the Illinois Department of Public Aid (IDPA). Funding for large-scale programming began more than a year and a half prior to the passage of welfare reform and has continued in the newly organized Department of Human Services - augmented by private sector funding – through the date of this report. Why did Illinois have such foresight? How did this happen? What were the results? These are the questions this report seeks to answer.

The purpose of this evaluation of citizenship educational services in Illinois funded by IDHS and the Fund for Immigrants and Refugees (the Fund) from 1995 to the present is to (1) document a historic coming together of stakeholders to make available generous funding for citizenship educational services from public and private sources, (2) describe the kinds of programming and technical assistance made possible through this funding, (3) assess the quality of citizenship education programming and technical assistance, highlighting both successes and issues of concern, and (4) make recommendations to address issues raised by the study.

The evaluation period extended from April '99 through March 2000. We used multiple methods to obtain information for the study. The project kicked off with a meeting of the advisory panel¹ on April 20, 1999. Information from this meeting helped

¹ The following people were members of the project's advisory panel: Peggy Dean, Adult Learning Resource Center; Susan Wexler, HIAS-Chicago; Reva Gupta and Fred Tsao, ICIRR; Val Obregon and Aphrodite Loutas, Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS); Rene Luna, Access Living; Marta Delgado, Midwest Immigrants Rights Center of

us develop a survey to 39 citizenship education programs funded by IDHS and the Fund. We received 38 responses. We also conducted interviews with 18 program administrators, observed 23 classes, and interviewed 26 teachers at 18 sites. In addition, we had extensive conversations with IDHS and the Fund.

Heartland Alliance; Mila Laschkewitsch, District 214 Adult Education; Magdalena Dolas, Polish American Association; Tim Bell and Ana Marina Martinez, Erie House; Dale Asis, CAALI; Suey Lee Chang, Chinese American Service League; Alice Cottingham, Fund for Immigrants and Refugees; Ed Silverman, IDHS; Salvador Cerna, Office of Congressman Luis Gutierrez; Eun Kim, Korean American Community Services; Rob Paral, Consultant.

Executive Summary

Since the first large-scale funding of citizenship services in 1995, naturalization education in Illinois has been in many ways a model for the nation. It is unique for the diversity of educational programming, the major role played by community-based organizations as providers, the long-term funding available to organizations, and the comprehensiveness of technical assistance made available to educators. This unprecedented commitment of the public and private sectors to fund educational services has enabled tens of thousands of immigrants to access educational service. This has been especially true for those immigrants who have been traditionally underserved by mainstream adult education providers.

Current naturalization law requires applicants to successfully pass an English and civics test unless they are exempt or waived under age and disability-related provisions. Applicants with a strong formal education, fluency in English, and the skills to study independently generally do not experience problems with the test. For those with weaker English skills and limited formal education, however, mastering enough English and civics knowledge to pass often constitutes a big challenge. In fact, insufficient English and civics knowledge is the main reason applicants are denied naturalization.² Appropriate test preparation through citizenship classes is critical to enable these applicants to pass the exam.

This study looks at practices in technical assistance, advocacy facilitation, instruction and design in programs funded by the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) and the Fund for Immigrants and Refugees (the Fund). It documents a wealth of innovative ideas and makes recommendations to strengthen and unify existing services.

This report: “Citizenship Education in Illinois: What Works,” by Heide Spruck Wrigley, Ph.D., senior researcher for language, literacy and learning with Aguirre International, and Aliza Becker, a key consultant to citizenship education programs, documents a plethora of diverse educational programs and technical assistance resources developed over the past five years in Illinois and pinpoints where those efforts could be improved. To fully appreciate the depth of the study, we encourage a reading of the entire report.

The tremendous investment made by state government and the private sector in the development of ethnic CBOs has resulted in a plethora of organizations both accessible to and trusted by immigrants that were strategically located to provide citizenship education programming to underserved populations

² IDHS has tracked more than 70,000 learners between January 1995 and December 1999. The Fund does not track unduplicated numbers, but estimates that their providers have served approximately 4300 learners. ISBE does not track students in its citizenship classes separately from other ABE or ESL students. SOS does not separately track ESL students preparing for their naturalization test.

Best Practices Highlights

Funders/Administration (IDHS and the Fund)

Illinois has been a national leader in the provision of naturalization services to its diverse immigrant communities. The state has been a leader not only in terms of its large financial commitment to services but also because of wide-spread organizing efforts that led to the advocacy for such funding. Illinois was also at the forefront of building an infrastructure for citizenship services along with a provider network ready to offer services to diverse immigrant communities. In doing so, state agencies as well as the private sector have extended a long history of providing comprehensive resources to assure the successful acculturation of immigrants and refugees in Illinois. These efforts included policy studies to identify needs, coupled with subsequent efforts to use findings to take action. Where no service infrastructure existed previously, statewide initiatives established the resources and training necessary to institute a system that encourages innovation, leadership development, and collaboration. This long-term commitment has resulted in a unique service system that is flexible enough to respond to changing needs. Thus, when naturalization emerged as a critical need, government and the private sector were prepared to provide funds to an extensive network of community and educational organizations. In providing an early response to immigrant needs and in building an infrastructure to respond to those needs, Illinois has served as a model for the nation.

In order to encourage efficiency and promote quality, funders encouraged grantees to cooperate and share services, information and advocacy. As a result, several unique clusters of organizations came together to offer educational and other naturalization-related services. Some had worked together previously while for others it was a new relationship. By working together, these collaborations encourage sharing of effective practices and an efficient division of labor based on areas of expertise. Overall, it has led to higher quality and more comprehensive services. For instance, the 16 partner community-based organizations (CBOs) in the Coalition of African, Asian, and Latino Immigrants of Illinois (CAALII) have different resources and services. Those agencies without a particular service are linked to other service components available at partner agencies through the collaboration. CAALI member Centro Romero, for example, offers legal assistance consultation to other collaboration members.

Program Design

Programs developed a broad range of English as a Second Language (ESL) and civics classes, including many that incorporate bilingual teachers and reading and writing instruction for the low-literate. A number of providers customized their programs to meet the needs of special populations, particularly the elderly. One of the most unique educational programs, both in the state and nationwide, is the Deaf Adults Education Access Program (DAEAP), which provides instruction in American Sign Language (ASL), written English and citizenship content to adult Deaf immigrants.

Illinois citizenship education programs have diverse and varied support services for citizenship education students. They include:

- Childcare for children and grandchildren
- Citizenship application assistance/workshops/follow-up services
- Information and referral
- Legal Assistance: family petitions, N-648 disability waivers
- ESL and citizenship tutoring home-based and in school
- Transportation reimbursement and van service
- Social activities, e.g. field trips, parties
- ESL classes/tutors
- Counseling/support groups/case management
- Workshops on issues of interest to students, e.g. parenting, crime prevention
- Escort/advocate to fingerprinting and interview

Instruction

Illinois has many hard-working, dedicated citizenship teachers. Many of them work long hours with their students to assure their success in passing the citizenship test. In addition, teachers spend hours trying to find innovative ways to teach their students. Many have written their own materials, often in their free time. Teachers celebrate their students' victories, but do not hesitate to continue to work with those learners who have failed. All in all, Illinois' citizenship education teachers tend to be an unusually committed group of individuals who have become passionate about teaching citizenship.

Teachers have developed many unique instructional materials to meet needs not filled by commercial materials and also to decrease costs. One of the most widely used materials is a professionally produced flashcard and audiotape set developed by one of CAALII's teachers. They offer it to member organizations for a nominal price. Recently CAALII received

seed money to disseminate it to a larger market. In the future, they also hope to publish a bingo game developed by another teacher at a partner agency.

Educator Technical Assistance

The Adult Learning Resource Center (ALRC) has developed a diverse series of citizenship teacher training workshops and other consultations on a wide range of citizenship-related topics. Many teachers and administrators reported that ALRC's diverse menu of workshops met an important need. The praise was particularly emphatic for the workshops series targeted to the new citizenship teachers, the workshop on teaching the low-literate and special needs students, and the workshop on how to use the Internet as an aid in classroom instruction. Due to their highly developed expertise, ALRC has received numerous requests for assistance from educators throughout the country.

ALRC has a statewide citizenship hotline for applicants seeking classes, tutoring or legal services and also for potential volunteers. This feature is a component of ALRC's Illinois Adult Learning Resource Center Hotline. It serves literacy students and also provides volunteer referrals throughout the state.

Advocacy

In 1996, staff from ALRC, ICIRR (Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights), and the Heartland Alliance for Human Needs and Human Rights (Heartland Alliance) negotiated with INS to standardize the content and evaluation of what was then a multiple choice test and dictation. When the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) switched to an oral test, ICIRR and ALRC worked with INS to maintain similar standards for the test content, dictation, and reading components of the exam. ALRC and a group of educators are currently continuing advocacy with INS to standardize the oral English in the interview.

Access Living in partnership with ICIRR manages the Immigrants with Disabilities Rights Project. The project provides information for immigrants with disabilities on their rights and makes them aware of available resources. They also conduct advocacy on the rights of immigrants with disabilities with the INS and recently filed a discrimination complaint with the Department of Justice relative to INS treatment of Deaf naturalization applicants.

Illinois offers a unique and coordinated effort to keep providers current on INS policies and procedures and to advocate for

changes as deemed appropriate through immigration and education technical service providers. The state also encourages collaborations among different programs and makes providers aware of existing coalitions.

Context for Findings:

1. Many of the problems identified in citizenship instruction are endemic to the adult literacy field. Teachers are often expected to function semi-autonomously with nominal supervision and few resources. They have little communication with administrators and other service providers within their agency or with peers at other organizations. This can affect both the quality of instruction and the communication of current information to teachers in the constantly changing arena of naturalization.
2. Illinois mobilized diverse stakeholders to advocate for citizenship education funding supported by the public and private sectors in anticipation of coming changes in the law that would necessitate such services. Significant funding was raised and thousands of learners successfully passed their citizenship test as a result of participation in funded classes. However, the funding raised has been insufficient to cover many areas of need.
3. The tremendous investment made by state government and the private sector in the development of ethnic community-based organization (CBOs) since the latter part of the 1970s resulted in a plethora of organizations both accessible to and trusted by underserved populations of immigrants. Many had experience in providing educational, legal and/or social services for the target population. Others only began to develop their educational administrative capacity with the advent of citizenship funding.
4. CBOs struggle with trying to help populations in great need with limited funding. Administrators are often stretched among several programs and as a result are unable to give adequate attention to all programs. Few are trained to supervise educational programs. In light of this situation, staff development funding is often not given high priority.
5. CBOs often hire bilingual members of their community as instructors. Without these teachers, many reluctant learners would not attend class; however, many of these teachers are not trained in ESL and adult teaching pedagogy.

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6. Illinois has funded multiple agencies to provide technical assistance to educators. Because of these resources, agencies were able to develop a wide array of services to meet different needs. The ability of teachers to access these services has been complicated by numerous factors. These include no funds for paid participation in teacher training; part-time teachers with other commitments in their non-teaching time; an attitude on the part of some administrators and teachers that since this is a part-time job, professional development is not a priority; high turnover among teachers in a number of programs; the assumption that teachers are not in need of training, and administrators' not sharing information on training opportunities with teachers.
 7. The lack of mandated funding to pay teachers for professional development has influenced the implementation of a technical assistance model that relies heavily on one-shot workshops.
 8. Few programs systematically measure English language development or civics knowledge. Assessment for either placement or progress is not mandated by funders. Nor are easily administered assessment instruments readily available. As a result, teachers, programs, and students do not have accurate and comprehensive information on the effectiveness of instruction. Based on classroom observations, it appears that instructional effectiveness is uneven across programs.
 9. Some instructional programs are not designed effectively for the targeted constituency. The role of English language acquisition in particular does not appear to be well understood. This lack of knowledge on how to foster proficiency in English is likely to affect student outcomes. That is, the students present special challenges-62% have less than a high school education, 20% are elderly. At the same time, the teachers by and large have not been trained in ESL instruction and thus are not well prepared to address the challenges.
 10. The variations among INS adjudicators in citizenship test administration and evaluation sometimes results in failure of applicants for seemingly inappropriate reasons. The best test preparation course is for naught if there is no follow-up and review requested in such incidents. While widely recognized as a problem, this type of follow-up is not systematic in all programs nor is there a uniform approach among providers to handling such situations.

Summary of Recommendations

Funder Recommendations³

1. Fund the development of a standards framework that includes program quality standards, as well as content or curriculum standards, which outline what students should know and be able to do. Benchmarks should be developed that allow learners and teachers to see what performance might look like at various levels of proficiency so that students can be placed correctly and their progress be assessed. Potential assessment instruments should be reviewed and field-tested for inclusion in the framework. Also included should be “opportunity to learn” standards that identify the learning opportunities that must be provided if hard-to-serve students are to succeed. Such a standards framework should be accompanied by training for administrators, teachers, and coalition/collaboration leaders, so that issues of content, implementation, and evaluation can be addressed.
2. Fund the development and dissemination of a video of best learner-centered instructional practices that includes demonstrations of how to manage a learner-centered classroom, develop English language skills for citizenship, and use the native language strategically. This video can be used as part of training and also as distance training for teachers unable to attend teacher training workshops in-person.
3. Require programs to offer paid professional development for teachers and strongly encourage them to set aside a certain percentage of funds for staff development. For example, the Illinois State Board of Education currently requires federally funded adult literacy programs to set aside 5% for staff development. Programs that have experienced staff with high retention, and therefore have a wealth of experience to draw from, should be able to commit fewer resources to professional development.
4. Fund a targeted campaign to ethnic communities on the higher standards for oral English on the citizenship test set by the INS and the importance of allowing sufficient time for preparation to meet these standards. The campaign should begin with a needs assessment to identify various

“I passed the test in December but I come every time because I like Paul and I like to speak English. If I have any questions, I ask him.”

³ Recommendations are primarily focused on the funders whose programs were the focus of this report: IDHS and the Fund. However, they are relevant to other naturalization funders in Illinois and throughout the country.

levels of awareness of the testing requirements in different ethnic communities.

5. Fund training on disability issues for all service providers, including guidance in acquiring funding for needed accommodations at classroom sites.

Program Design Recommendations

1. Program administrators must make greater efforts to share updated information on policies and procedures directly with their teachers or show them how to access such information. This dissemination of information can be accomplished through postings on the Adult Learning Resource Center (ALRC) for citizenship educators, updates and meeting notes distributed via the ICIRR's fax network, or teachers' participation at relevant meetings. In addition, administrators need to monitor the presentation of policy information to students to assure accuracy and completeness.
2. Programs should provide teachers with resources to address student application processing and other legal needs along with guidelines as to what extent teachers should address these issues in the classroom. Resources for teachers might include a referral list of free or low-cost organizations that provide quality application processing and/or legal assistance, referrals to qualified staff within the agency, on-site application processing workshops, guest speakers, or paid teacher time to contact experts with specific questions. Guidelines for teachers should include explaining the difference between offering legal advice and general information about the naturalization process; red flag referral issues; and knowing how to handle N-400 questions for students who do not have a copy of their N-400 submitted to INS for classroom practice.
3. Program administrators should work with their teachers and/or other staff on paid time to document and follow-up on problems that students are experiencing in the INS interview process.

Instructional Recommendations

1. Program administrators should develop an individual professional development plan with each of their instructors and budget a line item to pay teachers for the time involved in such development. The plan may include paid attendance at workshops, coalition meetings or conferences; materials development; observations of other teachers; or individual study to attain background information and increase one's repertoire of instructional strategies. Administrators also

need to monitor relevant training opportunities, make teachers aware of them, and encourage participation.

2. Program administrators should develop a means to observe teacher performance to ensure that students get a chance to develop relevant knowledge and acquire the language and literacy skills necessary to negotiate the INS interview. Such observations can be based on program quality standards (which should include a section on classroom teaching) and can involve self-assessments for teachers as well as administrators. Trained professionals within or external to the organization should be available to provide coaching to teachers in need.

Technical Assistance Recommendations

1. ALRC should strengthen its technical assistance model by diversifying its professional development opportunities for teachers and volunteers, providing more flexible scheduling that includes evenings and weekends, soliciting more input from workshop participants regarding their needs and expectations prior to workshops, and promoting more widely the array of services and resources they offer including ESL training. We recognize that many of these options will also require a larger commitment of individual agency funding to staff development.
2. In order to meet the needs of all teachers, ALRC should regularly conduct a needs assessment of a broad range of citizenship programs, using measures such as focus groups, interviews of teachers and students, surveys, and classroom observations. They should particularly target CBOs who do not currently use their services or use them nominally.
3. ALRC should expand its Web Page to make it a more comprehensive source of information for teachers and set up a fax network of providers who do not have access to the Internet to provide them with information posted. We recommend the following changes on their Web Page: (1) classify its contents, so that the site is identified when users type key words such as "Adult Learning Resource Center" and "citizenship education" on popular search engines, (2) post information about "red flag" issues and post information about "red flag" issues and the restrictions of legal advice, (3) post a list of potential guest speakers that can be invited to citizenship classes, (4) post teacher job openings, (5) post basic test information including the 96 history and government questions and the dictation sentences, (6) summarize updates from ICIRR and INS CBO meetings, and (7) post additional pedagogical information.

The pedagogical information should include packets of materials outlining creative and innovative ideas for experienced teachers who are able to create lessons on their own. It should also include sample activities for a broader audience that link theory and practice in citizenship education, focusing on the different skill areas addressed in the INS exam (interview, dictation, etc.). Lastly these packets should include teaching materials that instructors can download and adapt for their classes.

4. Technical assistance providers should provide information on funding for post-citizenship programs for general and special needs populations so that programs can offer transition services beyond citizenship. In some cases, programs might seek funding for transition classes to prepare students for the next program, e.g. vocational training, pre-academic ESL, etc. In other cases, programs might seek funding to focus on encouraging the civic participation of new citizens.

Advocacy Recommendations

1. Technical assistance providers, advocates, program administrators, and teachers should strengthen coordination of efforts to address applicants' problems at the INS interview with simple paperwork and comprehensive follow-up.
2. The Immigrants with Disabilities Rights Project (IDRP), together with ALRC, should collect and disseminate information on accommodations for applicants with learning disabilities. In addition, IDRP should provide assistance for test cases to apply for N-648 disability waivers based on learning disabilities.

I. Organization, Development, and Implementation of Funding

Summary

With great foresight, immigrant and refugee advocates in Illinois anticipated the need for naturalization service in the early 1990s. They worked with state government, and private foundations to secure funding for a major statewide citizenship effort involving a significant presence of community-based organizations (CBOs). Primary funding for this effort came from the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) and the Fund for Immigrants and Refugees (the Fund), and they are the main focus of this report. Critical research conducted by the Illinois Immigrant Policy Group helped these naturalization advocacy efforts justify their cause. Many elected officials joined their ranks lending resources and their voices to the cause of naturalization. The readiness of CBOs to offer naturalization services (especially education) in Chicago and the willingness of suburban immigrant service providers to take on naturalization supplied a network of providers that give Illinois immigrants support throughout the naturalization process.

Immigrant and refugee advocates in Illinois anticipated the need for naturalization services in the early 1990s. They worked with state government, and private foundations to secure funding for a major statewide citizenship effort involving a significant presence of community-based organizations.

Background

Illinois is home to one of the most diverse immigrant populations in the United States with large communities from Poland, the former Soviet Union, Korea, the Philippines, Guatemala and India. In addition the Chicago metropolitan area has one of the nation's largest urban Mexican populations. About 55 percent of the state's 1,366,745 foreign-born residents⁴ have naturalized and, as of November 1999, 81,008 have applications pending.⁵

Reason For Increased Rates of Naturalization Applications

In Illinois, like in many other states with large immigrant populations, the number of naturalization applicants swelled in the latter half of the 1990s. This was due to several factors. First, a record high number of immigrants became legally eligible to naturalize due to high levels of immigration to the state in the 1980s and 1990s, including the 155,000 Illinois residents who

⁴ Paral, Rob, Citizenship 2000: Illinois Immigrants and Naturalization Needs: A Report to the Fund for Immigrants and Refugees and the Illinois Department of Human Services, National Center on Poverty Law, January 2000.

⁵ Ibid

were granted legal status through the amnesty legalization program of the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (IRCA)⁶. Second, immigrant advocates accelerated outreach to non-citizens, promoting the benefits of citizenship and offering easy access to group application processing. Lastly, many immigrants felt compelled to naturalize in response to the threatened reduction of immigrant rights and benefits that began with California's Proposition 187 and culminated in Congress passing several laws in 1996⁷ that contained strong anti-immigrant provisions.

Former governor Jim Edgar and his successor George Ryan were instrumental in making funding available for naturalization.

Funding Illinois Naturalization Efforts

Government and private funders in Illinois have devoted \$12.8 million dollars to fund citizenship outreach, advocacy, education, application, and legal services. They made an early commitment to assure a service provider and technical assistance infrastructure was in place when the need increased and made substantial resources available over an extended period of time, enabling organizations to establish solid programming. They also recognized the importance of funding both application assistance and citizenship test preparation services. State government and foundations understood the tremendous cost of test preparation for hard-to-serve populations and made a proportionally larger share of funding available to education-related services. They also funded several technical assistance providers to assure quality. Lastly, they recognized the importance of CBOs as key service providers for vulnerable populations in many ethnic communities.

State Agencies Involvement

Former governor Jim Edgar and his successor George Ryan were instrumental in making funding available for naturalization. Edgar was very attuned to the ethnic communities of Illinois. He had strong personal ties to citizenship and immigration issues through his Asian Advisory Committee and Advisory Committee on Latino Affairs. The ethnic leaders in these committees were very persuasive in convincing the governor to devote state dollars to the citizenship effort. Edgar understood the benefits of immigration to the state and objected to the unfairness of changing immigration rules after the fact. He was particularly concerned about the adverse impact welfare reform had on the elderly and children.

⁶ The majority of IRCA legalization applicants became eligible in 1994 and 1995, but many applied for naturalization after their eligibility date.

⁷ In 1996, Congress passed three laws with anti-immigrant provisions: the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 commonly known as welfare reform, the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act commonly known as the Immigration Act of 1996, and the Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act.

In 1995, before any other state took up the cause, Illinois initiated what would become a long-term commitment to funding citizenship services through the Refugee and Immigrant Citizenship Initiative (RICI). Under Dr. Edwin Silverman's direction, the first Request for Proposal (RFP) was issued in 1994 by the Illinois Department of Public Aid (IDPA) subsequently a part of the new Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS). It was one year before the passage of the welfare reform law and two years before most states had started allocating money for naturalization. Between 1995 and 2001 Illinois allocated \$8.3 million to citizenship services. Approximately 75% of this total went to education-related services. Since 1995, RICI has funded 30 agencies; in the most recent round of grants, awards ranged from \$30,000 to \$450,000 for an 18-month period.

The largest private funder initiative, the Fund for Immigrants and Refugees (the Fund), was founded in early 1997 under the auspices of Grantmakers Concerned for Immigrants and Refugees (GCIR) a local member issue group affiliated with the Donors Forum of Chicago.

The state's largest adult literacy funders also took early leadership. The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) funded the development of a citizenship teacher resource guide⁸ in 1992 with federal Section 353 funds (HEIDE CAN YOU DO A FOOTNOTE AND EXPLAIN WHAT THESE ARE) that became a core resource for citizenship educators across the country. This effort motivated the production of one of the nation's best selling citizenship education textbooks, "Citizenship Now: A Guide for Naturalization."⁹ ISBE also continued to fund citizenship classes within adult education ESL programs at community colleges, public schools and CBOs. In addition, the Secretary of State (SOS) Literacy Office allowed many of the ESL volunteer literacy programs they funded to use ESL volunteers to develop English language proficiency for students preparing for the citizenship test as the need for such services increased.¹⁰ While ISBE and SOS funded programs are not the focus of this report, they have contributed to the success of programs funded by IDHS and the Fund for Immigrants and Refugees (the Fund).

Private Foundation Involvement

Foundations took longer to rally to naturalization in significant numbers. Once aligned, however, they contributed over four million dollars to naturalization and related immigrant services.

⁸ Becker, Aliza, Building Bridges: A Resource Guide on Citizenship, Travelers & Immigrants Aid for the Illinois State Board of Education, Adult Education and Literacy Section, Curriculum Publications Clearinghouse, Macomb, IL, 1993.

⁹ Becker, Aliza and Laurie Edwards, Citizenship Now: A Guide for Naturalization, NTC/Contemporary, Lincolnwood, IL, 1995. The concept for the text was initiated by former ISBE Adult Literacy Director Noreen Lopez and co-authored by Building Bridges writer Aliza Becker.

¹⁰ The Secretary of State Literacy Office does not maintain statistics on the amount of funding that supported English instruction for citizenship.

The Joyce Foundation was the first foundation to become involved in citizenship funding. Under Sunny Fischer's leadership, it gave \$220,000 in targeted funding for naturalization to Chicago area organizations in 1992 for outreach, application and legal assistance. The Joyce Foundation funding included a grant to the Latino Institute to produce the "Hopes and Dreams" report cited below, which quantified the nature and extent of non-citizen communities. The demonstration money given by the Joyce Foundation established an area of need the IDHS later expanded on.

In addition, a network of Jewish philanthropy has been enormously supportive of Soviet Jewish citizenship needs. This included significant funding from the Crown family. The Jewish Federation and the Council of Jewish Federations also channeled foundation money and individual contributions to help Soviet Jews naturalize. With this support and funds from RICJ, the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society of Chicago (HIAS-Chicago) has assisted over 6,500 people with applications for citizenship and answered more than 8,000 calls a year through its bilingual hotline. HIAS-Chicago's diverse educational services include small group citizenship classes at numerous community sites including senior citizen housing, a bilingual in-home tutorial program for homebound elderly, and refresher mock interviews prior to the interview. They also negotiate with doctors to fill out disability waiver applications and provide translation and advocacy during the interview. The programs are implemented by a combination of professional staff and volunteers.

Other foundations, local and national, supported early naturalization efforts. Support was provided locally through the Chicago Community Trust, the Union League Civic & Art Foundation, and the Woods Charitable Fund (now Woods Fund of Chicago) and nationally from the Fannie Mae Foundation, Ford Foundation, and Carnegie Foundation.

The Fund for Immigrants and Refugees (the Fund) is the largest private funder initiative. It was founded in early 1997 under the auspices of Grantmakers Concerned for Immigrants and Refugees (GCIR), a local member issue group affiliated with the Donors Forum of Chicago. In January 1997, ICIRR and GCIR sponsored a meeting of funders and nonprofits to discuss the impact in immigrant communities of the new welfare law.

The meeting also featured Antonio Maciel, the staffer for philanthropist George Soros's \$50 million new national initiative, the Emma Lazarus Fund (ELF), created in response "to welfare reform legislation that denies legal immigrants equal

In providing the necessary infrastructure and in funding citizenship services right as the need emerged, Illinois served as a model for the nation.

a variety of public assistance programs.”¹¹. Local
e galvanized by concern about the consequences of
and by the opportunity to draw new funds to Chicago
and develop a new resource for local immigrant communities.

A group of local private foundations, some not active in GCIR, agreed on the principles for a new grantmaking collaborative; wrote the proposal for funding to ELF; and raised money locally by recruiting other grantmaking partners. Some of those key to this work were Nikki Will Stein, (Executive Director, Polk Bros. Foundation, and chair at the time of the Donors Fourm board), Leslie Ramyk (Program Officer with WPWR-TV Channel 50 Foundation), Daranee Petsod (ICIRR’s interim Executive Director and co-chair of GCIR), Margo DeLey (Chicago Community Trust staff and GCIR co-chair), Rob Paral (Latino Institute staff), Chris Grumm (Chicago Foundation for Women Executive Director), and Alice Cottingham (Crossroads Fund Executive Director).

The Fund has been a major catalyst in building private support for immigrant and refugee communities in the metropolitan Chicago area. It currently consists of 23 local foundations, ELF and IDHS. Created as a two-year project, it received \$1.5 million from Emma Lazarus and \$1,625,000 from local sources in FY98 and FY99. IDHS became a member the second year, joining the Fund with a \$500,000 contribution to leverage private dollars with public funds.

Pleased with its early work and clear that more remained to be accomplished, the Fund’s steering committee agreed in FY99 to continue for another two years. To date, the Fund has raised \$5.8 million including an additional \$150,000 from ELF. For FY00 and FY01, the majority of local partners have increased their contributions; IDHS has contributed \$1,422,500 million, the Chicago Community Trust \$400,000, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation \$400,000, and the Polk Bros. Foundation \$300,000. The Fund expects to raise \$6.3 million by FY01.

Through the winter of 1999, the Fund awarded grants for citizenship services three times for a total of \$2.2 million. It has also funded legal services, community organizing, and policy and community advocacy (\$1.7 million in two cycles). It has made grants for citizenship to 45 organizations since 1997 with annual grants ranging from \$5,000 to \$300,000.

¹¹ *Emma Lazarus Fund-What’s New at Elf?*, “About Us”, <http://www.soros.org/emma/html/new.html>

Contributions of Targeted Research to Naturalization Advocacy Efforts

The Illinois Immigrant Policy Group (IIPG)

The anti-immigrant sentiment that was most clearly expressed in California with Proposition 187 inspired the founding of the Illinois Immigrant Policy Group in 1995. This group was co-sponsored by the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago and the Latino Institute. The IIPG sponsored research that helped dispel misinformation about immigrants or disseminated by anti-immigrant groups, including quantifying tax contributions and identifying immigrants' locations throughout the state. It was key in winning support for naturalization funding from diverse government and private sources and eventually won significant state legislative support for immigrant services to replace some of those reduced or eliminated by federal legislation. It provided philanthropic organizations with hard data on which to base grant decisions, and provided nonprofit organizations with detailed information on the specific immigrant groups they serve. IDHS provided financial support for the IIPG, along with the Chicago Community Trust. The IIPG produced a series of analyses including:¹²

1. Illinois and Immigrant Policy: A Briefing Book for State and Local Policymakers
2. Taxes Paid by Illinois Immigrants
3. Estimated Costs of Providing Welfare and Educational Services to Immigrants and the Native Born in Illinois
4. Public Aid and Illinois Immigrants: Serving Noncitizens in the Welfare Reform Era

Other Latino Institute Studies

The Latino Institute independently produced other reports that provided statistical data on non-citizens and helped draw attention to the issue of naturalization. These reports included "Hopes and Dreams: A Statistical Profile of Metropolitan Chicago's Noncitizen Community," and "Indicators for Understanding: A Profile of Metro Chicago's Immigrant Community." IIPP and the Latino Institute collectively fostered numerous stories about non-citizens in the news media and drew attention to the importance of naturalization.

¹² The IIPP analyses were produced by Rob Paral and other staff of the Latino Institute. The analysis of taxes paid by immigrants was produced by Jeff Passel and Rebecca Clark of the Urban Institute.

Citizenship 2000: Illinois Immigrants and Naturalization Needs

In January 2000, the National Center on Poverty Law funded by IDHS and FIR published an updated report on naturalization by Rob Paral, lead writer and researcher of most of IIPG's reports. Among the findings were that there will be an estimated 235,907 Illinois noncitizens eligible to naturalize in January 2000. Also, "in the next five years (2000 to 2004) 74,452 immigrants will complete five years of legal residence in Illinois but will not speak English well. The lack of English skills alone will make it difficult for many of these immigrants to qualify for naturalization."¹³

Involvement of Illinois Elected Officials in Naturalization Efforts

NALEO's Groundbreaking Citizenship Promotion

Elected officials in Illinois have played a key role nationally and locally in promoting naturalization and providing assistance to individual applicants. Many of them were influenced by the work of the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO). This national organization popularized the concept of citizenship and voting as a key strategy in the empowerment of Latino immigrants. In his 1990 paper "Citizenship as a Strategy for Latino Political Empowerment", former NALEO Executive Director Harry Pachon wrote:

"U.S. citizenship...has been traditionally overlooked as a significant factor in the Hispanic community's empowerment... The large numbers of legal Latino non-citizens permanently residing in this country have consequences for American society at large and the greater Hispanic community."¹⁴

The "Taller" Citizenship Workshop and Elected Officials

In order to promote naturalization on a massive scale, NALEO developed the "taller" or workshop model¹⁵ of processing

"U.S. citizenship...has been traditionally overlooked as a significant factor in the Hispanic community's empowerment... The large numbers of legal Latino non-citizens permanently residing in this country have consequences for American society at large and the greater Hispanic community."

¹³ Paral, Rob, *Citizenship 2000: Illinois Immigrants and Naturalization Needs: A Report to the Fund for Immigrants and Refugees and the Illinois Department of Human Services*, National Center on Poverty Law, January 2000.

¹⁴ Pachon, H.S. (1990, March 29) *U.S. Citizenship as a Strategy for Latino Political Empowerment* (NALEO Background Paper #13). Los Angeles, CA: NALEO Educational Fund.

naturalization applications. They brought it to Chicago when they established a local affiliate in 1991 and subsequently invited elected and appointed officials to promote and participate in their workshops. Many communities adopted this model as application workshops spread throughout the state.

Using the NALEO *taller* model, Chicago Alderman Danny Solis established one of the largest and most aggressive organizations in promoting naturalization and processing applications when he served as the Executive Director of the United Neighborhood Organization (UNO). UNO's report, "Citizenship Potential, Barriers and Attitudes among Latinos in Chicago: A Citywide Survey," released in October 1992, had a significant impact in increasing the importance of citizenship in the Latino community as well as granting the issue credibility with the Chicago City Hall and the Illinois governor.

Illinois elected officials at every level became involved in naturalization efforts as it became evident that new citizens would increasingly dominate the demographics of their districts. Elected officials from diverse ethnic communities have sponsored numerous application workshops; the officials and their office staff help with publicity, volunteer recruitment, and other logistics as well as making inspirational speeches to applicants waiting in line to get their citizenship applications completed. A few have made presentations for citizenship classes, even teaching class.¹⁶ The outspokenness of Latino elected officials in particular encouraged a great many immigrants who might not otherwise have considered naturalization to apply for citizenship.

Illinois elected officials at every level became involved in naturalization efforts as it became evident that new citizens would increasingly dominate the demographics of their districts.

Federal Elected Officials Take National Leadership

In addition to sponsoring workshops, Illinois' U.S. senators and representatives have assigned specially trained staff to assist naturalization applicants with common problems such as long delays, lost files, inappropriate denials and related matters. Their experience dealing with their frustrated constituents has caused many elected officials to become involved in advocacy efforts to improve customer service at the INS.

Recently, Representative Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) called on Representative Henry Hyde (R-IL), chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, to hold Congressional field hearings on the inability of INS to provide promised services and the need to

¹⁵ The *taller* model enables a large group of applicants to complete their application, get photos, and fingerprints taken in a short period of time. It involves separate stations for the application, photos, fingerprints, and quality control staffed by volunteer lay people, lawyers and paid staff. Fingerprinting was eliminated from the process when INS took over that function.

¹⁶ In 1994 co-author Aliza Becker invited State Senator Miguel Del Valle to talk with her agency's citizenship class. He proceeded to teach the students about the structure of government.

improve customer service. Those hearings were held in September 1999 with the majority of complaints related to naturalization. Schakowsky continues to vigilantly monitor the Chicago INS District office.

No leader has assumed a more prominent position in naturalization issues than U.S. Representative Luis Gutierrez (D-IL). As a result, he has become the most recognized political leader among Latinos nationally.¹⁷ In 1993, when it looked as though many states would not be able to use all of their funds authorized under the State Legalization Impact Assistance Grant (SLIAG), Representative Gutierrez (D-IL) and former U.S. Senator Paul Simon (D-IL) sponsored legislation that authorized states to spend some six million of these funds on naturalization services for amnesty immigrants. In 1995, Gutierrez organized the Naturalization Committee in the Fourth Congressional District, comprised of 13 state, county and local Latino elected officials, to organize citizenship application processing workshops. Latino legislators, State Senator Miguel del Valle and former State Senator Jesus Garcia, played an early prominent role in this organization. Under Gutierrez's leadership, tens of thousands of Illinois' Latino residents have naturalized. In the House of Representatives, Gutierrez is the head of the Citizenship and Immigration Committee of the House Hispanic Caucus. He regularly critiques INS on naturalization issues ranging from the backlog to the fee increase.

Mayor Daley and the City of Chicago

In Chicago, Mayor Richard M. Daley was an early promoter of citizenship. "Because of its interest in expanding the pool of eligible voters and promoting civic participation, the [Daley] administration identified citizenship as a priority issue."¹⁸ The Latino community in particular was noticed as the potential swing vote in city-wide elections.

The city has provided funds for a number of efforts, including citizenship outreach, naturalization ceremonies, public information and advocacy. These activities have been conducted by the Council on Immigrant and Refugee Affairs of the City's Commission on Human Relations and the Citizenship Advisory Council which is "an organization composed of corporations, community-based organizations, Chambers of Commerce, State organizations and others interested in serving Chicago's

¹⁷ In a national poll conducted in November 1999, Spanish language television channel Univision, found that Luis Gutierrez was the most widely recognized political leader in the U.S.

¹⁸ Gzesh, Susan, Marketa Lindt, and David Marzahl, "New Citizenship Chicago-Style: A Partnership that Works", the Chicago Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Protection, April, 1995, pg. 31.

immigrant communities.”¹⁹ Set up by Mayor Daley in July 1994, the Advisory Council has developed and coordinated many naturalization assistance activities, including numerous swearing-in ceremonies for residents of Chicago.

CBOs as Key Naturalization Service Providers

CBOs serve as the primary service providers for the Illinois citizenship initiative, especially in the city of Chicago. Community colleges and other entities have a smaller role, largely outside the city. The readiness of these agencies to advocate for services and take on the work rose out of nearly two decades of immigrant and refugee organizational and resource development and a more than century old Chicago tradition of supporting CBOs. A key part of this development has been the involvement of CBOs and other immigrant service and policy organizations in interethnic collaborations, including the Illinois Ethnic Coalition, the Refugee Resettlement Consortium, the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights(ICIRR), and the Coalition for Limited English Speaking Elderly (CLESE). Another key aspect was the experience afforded many organizations in direct administration of educational funds through SLIAG, ISBE and SOS funding. High quality teacher training available through the Adult Learning Resource Center (ALRC) proved essential in establishing these services. Lastly, many CBOs had experience working with the INS to assist with refugee resettlement and amnesty needs that became critical when naturalization applications began to increase.

History of Community-Based Organizations in Chicago

Chicago has a long history and solid foundation of CBOs in newcomer communities. Jane Addams, a prominent leader in the settlement house movement at the turn of the century, left Chicago a strong legacy of multi-purpose community centers in immigrant communities. In fact, a number of CBOs, such as Erie Neighborhood House and Association House, remain at least partially housed in these century old buildings. Chicago continues to be home to a plethora of CBOs serving ethnic and geographical communities.

It was in Chicago that Saul Alinsky developed his widely adopted principles of community organizing during the 1960s. This resulted in the infusion of an activist orientation into many CBOs, which in the long run helped garner their active

¹⁹Mayor Daley's Chicago Citizenship Assistance Council Report-June 1999.

participation in advocating for government-funded naturalization services and promoting naturalization to their constituents.

Interethnic CBOs and other Service Provider Collaborations

Illinois Ethnic Coalition of the American Jewish Committee (AJC)

The AJC established the Illinois Ethnic Coalition in the latter part of the 1970s. This Coalition was the first in Illinois to formally convene leaders from diverse ethnic communities around issues of common concern. They sought to establish the universality of many social concerns experienced by individual ethnic communities under the assumption that shared problems could be best resolved jointly.

Refugee Resettlement Consortium

Since the end of the Vietnam War, Illinois has had a strong refugee resettlement program. In 1976, diverse organizations serving refugees started working together as a consortium. They cooperated on job placement, language instruction, bilingual vocational training, and mental and physical health services. The Consortium also has always had an active educational component with state of the art ESL methodology. These groups were already discussing immigration concerns when naturalization emerged as a key issue.

The Refugee Consortium also allowed the Jewish Federation to gain expertise as its fiscal agent. Their experience in managing a large scale consortium of ethnic, community, educational and other non-profit organizations was pivotal in their ability to provide similar services under the State Legalization Impact Assistance Grant (SLIAG) program from 1987 to 1993.

Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (ICIRR)

The Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Protection (ICIRP), now known as the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights, was founded in 1987 soon after the passage of IRCA. It brought together diverse organizations that worked with immigrants and refugees to jointly discuss and formulate solutions for shared problems. ICIRR was very active in working on issues related to the amnesty program of 1986. Early on they saw citizenship as the next step for those who had obtained legal status under IRCA.

In 1992 the Coalition formed the Citizenship Task Force (since renamed the Citizenship and Immigration Committee). The Task

The Task Force became an important forum for advocates and service providers to resolve issues, provide updates on current INS practices, and share effective service strategies. It encouraged Illinois governmental representatives to take an active role nationally and locally.

Force became an important forum for service providers to resolve issues, provide updates on current INS practices, and share effective service strategies. It encouraged Illinois governmental representatives to take an active role nationally and locally in providing appropriate funding and services to naturalize the hundreds of thousands of non-citizens in Illinois.

ICIRR was key in much of the initial advocacy with foundations and government. It inspired the Joyce Foundation to make their initial naturalization grant in 1992 and was also influential in the formation of Chicago's Citizenship Assistance Council.

Coalition of Limited English Speaking Elderly (CLESE)

CLESE was founded in 1989 to improve the lives of limited English speaking elderly through leadership, education, and advocacy. The 40-member organization represents the elderly from numerous ethnic communities in the Chicago metropolitan area. More than a year prior to the passage of the welfare reform law, CLESE staff advised their membership of the impending changes. When the law passed, many agencies geared up to offer citizenship education classes to their constituency.

CBOs as Educational Providers

CBOs are important resources to reach and serve many ethnic communities. They are able to play this role because of their proximity to immigrant populations, their tendency to be relatively small in size, and because they generally have staff (and in some cases teachers) who speak the students' native language. Many times these attributes allow learners with little formal education to feel more comfortable in the environs of a CBO than in a larger institutional setting, such as a community college.

SLIAG Funding

The state of Illinois made a significant allocation of State Legalization Impact Assistance Grant (SLIAG) education funds to CBOs, helping many to establish an adult literacy infrastructure. Prior to SLIAG, many immigrant CBOs had hosted adult literacy classes but not directly administered programs. SLIAG funding, allocated by IRCA to address the legal and educational needs of those who obtained legal status under this amnesty law, gave them that opportunity. Between 1989 and 1993, 110,000 Illinois students participated in SLIAG-funded education classes. Unlike any other state, 60% of education funds went to CBOs, with the rest being allocated to community colleges and school districts. The educational funds were largely used to help applicants meet the requirement that they successfully complete an ESL/Civics course or pass an

authorized English and civics test in order to obtain their permanent resident card (Green Card). In Illinois, applicants were also eligible to participate in a variety of SLIAG-funded educational classes, including citizenship preparation, after they met the basic requirements for legalization.

The ETS New Citizens Test

When the Educational Testing Service (ETS) was certified by INS to offer standardized citizenship testing²⁰ through community sites beginning in March of 1993, many of the organizations receiving SLIAG funds were the first to sign on. They immediately recognized its importance to their constituency even before significant naturalization funding was available.

When citizenship began to emerge as a key issue, ALRC was ready to build upon the expertise it had acquired under SLIAG.

ISBE and SOS Educational Funding

In 1993 ISBE opened its funding stream to community-based organizations; the SOS Literacy Office had done so on a much smaller scale since its initiation in fiscal year 1986. Many CBOs were eligible for ISBE funds only because of their experience with SLIAG.

Citizenship Teacher Training: The Adult Learning Resource Center (ALRC)

CBOs and other educational providers throughout the state have benefited from ESL and citizenship teacher training offered by the ALRC. Under SLIAG funding, ALRC was called upon to train hundreds of teachers, largely from CBOs, in the basics of ESL/Civics instruction. This was a unique challenge as large numbers of SLIAG students had never participated in adult literacy classes and many of the SLIAG teachers had never taught ESL. Undaunted, ALRC developed a sequence of teacher training workshops that was highly successful.

When citizenship began to emerge as a key issue, ALRC was ready to build upon the expertise it had acquired under SLIAG. Before it had funding for citizenship teacher training, ALRC assigned a training consultant to regularly attend citizenship meetings. The information acquired was communicated to ALRC's vast network of ESL providers throughout the state, providing them with advanced notice of the pending need. When

²⁰ The ETS New Citizens Test was offered as an alternative way for citizenship applicants to demonstrate competency in the civics and English reading and writing requirements for naturalization. Those who passed the ETS test were only tested on their oral English at the naturalization interview unless the officer suspected fraud. INS discontinued standardized testing in August 1998.

major funding emerged through the IDHS funded Refugee and Immigrant Citizenship Initiative (RICI), ALRC had the internal expertise to provide training in a range of naturalization-related workshop topics. Few other states developed a citizenship teacher training infrastructure and as a result ALRC has received numerous out-of-state requests for assistance from teachers who do not have access to such resources.

CBO Relationship with the Chicago District Office of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS)

The Chicago INS has a long history of working with CBOs. They first established relationships with CBOs through the refugee resettlement program. INS did not have sufficient staff to help with the large numbers of refugees in need of adjustment of status for permanent residency, so they granted CBOs the authority to assume some of the work.²¹ Under SLIAG, INS once again looked to CBOs for help by authorizing some a status known as “Qualified Designated Entity” (QDE).²²

INS District Director A.D. Moyer also did enormous outreach on citizenship starting with amnesty through the end of his tenure in early 1996. He had a weekly Spanish language Saturday night television program, “Linea Abierta,” in which he regularly promoted the benefits of citizenship. Moyer also instituted one of the first citizenship outreach programs in the country. INS officers conducted naturalization interviews on-site at CBOs. The INS based its short-lived national “Citizenship USA” program, which institutionalized community interviews and streamlined the process, on the Chicago model.

Congressional restrictions in INS policy have made it more difficult for the current INS District Director Brian Perryman to maintain the same level of working relationship with CBOs; the association has continued, although it has not often been an easy relationship. The Chicago INS conducts monthly meetings with CBOs and regularly sends representatives to the Adult Learning Resource Center’s (ALRC) Educator’s Interest Group meetings. The Chicago INS office also has been negotiating with advocates and educators to standardize the oral component of the INS citizenship test.

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Suburban Naturalization Providers

²¹ CBOs filled out adjustment of status paperwork, took fingerprints and photos, and organized and hosted INS interviews for refugees seeking to adjust their status.

²² QDEs were authorized both to represent amnesty applicants and to fill out their required paperwork.

Immigrant service providers in Chicago's suburbs have a very different history than those in the city. Community colleges are the primary educational provider with CBOs playing a smaller role. Some of the colleges have widely dispersed outreach sites to reach clusters of immigrants. The capacity and numbers of service providers have not been able to keep pace with the rapidly growing immigrant population. In some regions, a coalition of providers have worked together to provide comprehensive citizenship and referral services. ICIRR's Immigrant and Refugee Suburban Committee has worked tirelessly to bring together providers and to advocate for additional resources to serve immigrant populations in the suburbs. They have also sought to connect them with other interethnic collaborations based in the Chicago.

Conclusion

Illinois has been a national leader in the provision of naturalization services to its diverse immigrant communities. The state has been a leader not only in terms of its large financial commitment to services but also because of wide-spread organizing efforts that led to the advocacy for such funding. Illinois was also at the forefront of building an infrastructure for citizenship services along with a provider network ready to offer services to diverse immigrant communities. In doing so, state agencies as well as the private sector have extended a long history of providing comprehensive resources to assure the successful acculturation of immigrants and refugees in Illinois. These efforts included policy studies to identify needs, coupled with subsequent efforts to use findings to take action. Where no service infrastructure existed previously, statewide initiatives established the resources and training necessary to institute a system that encourages innovation, leadership development, and collaboration. This long-term commitment has resulted in a unique service system that is flexible enough to respond to changing needs. Thus, when naturalization emerged as a critical need, government and the private sector were prepared to provide funds to an extensive network of community and educational organizations. In providing an early response to immigrant needs and in building an infrastructure to respond to those needs, Illinois has served as a model for the nation.

Illinois was also at the forefront of building an infrastructure for citizenship services along with a provider network ready to offer services to diverse immigrant communities.

II. Citizenship Educational Services in Illinois

Summary

This unit provides an overview of Illinois' citizenship education services. Its four sections are (1) Profile of Citizenship Students, (2) Illinois Citizenship Education Providers, (3) Collaborations, (4) Citizenship Tutor Training Providers, and (5) Educator Technical Assistance and Advocacy Facilitation Providers. Each section is followed by contact information on appropriate providers. The list of educational providers in this unit includes agencies funded by the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS), the Fund for Immigrants and Refugees (the Fund), the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), and the Secretary of State (SOS). The overall focus of the evaluation though is on those programs funded by IDHS and the Fund.

Background

Current naturalization law requires applicants to successfully pass an English and civics test unless they are exempt or waived under age and disability-related provisions. Applicants with a strong formal education, fluency in English, and the skills to study independently generally do not experience problems with the test. For those with weaker English skills and limited formal education, however, mastering enough English and civics knowledge to pass is often a big challenge. In fact, insufficient English and civics knowledge is the main reason applicants are denied naturalization.²³ Appropriate test preparation is critical to enable these applicants to pass the exam.

Profile of Citizenship Students

In Illinois, IDHS and the Fund understood that citizenship instruction would be critical for vulnerable populations and as such devoted a significant portion of their naturalization resources to educational services. More than 75,000 students have attended citizenship classes or received tutoring in Illinois since 1995.²⁴ This includes learners from more than 95 different

²³ IDHS has tracked more than 70,000 learners between January 1995 and December 1999. The Fund does not track unduplicated numbers, but estimates that their providers have served approximately 4300 learners. ISBE does not track students in its citizenship classes separately from other ABE or ESL students. SOS does not separately track ESL students preparing for their naturalization test.

²⁴ IDHS has tracked more than 70,000 learners between January 1995 and December 1999. The Fund does not track unduplicated numbers, but estimate that their providers have served approximately 8600 learners. ISBE does not track students in its citizenship classes separately from other ABE or ESL students. SOS does not separately track ESL students preparing for their naturalization test.

countries. About 60% have less than a high school education, 34% have less than six years of formal education and 20% have been limited English speaking elderly.²⁵

Illinois Citizenship Education Providers

IDHS and the Fund focused much of their educational funding on providers that were best positioned to serve adults with limited formal education who might have difficulty attending classes in a traditional education settings, including the elderly and/or people with disabilities. Many of the programs in Chicago are in CBOs that are in close geographical proximity to the targeted population and trusted by community members. In suburban and downstate areas, providers include CBOs, community colleges, school districts and religious-affiliated institutions.

Service Model

Prior to welfare reform, most citizenship classes funded by ISBE were history and government classes in English, often linked to ESL programs and recruited out of these programs. They presumed a high level of oral and written English proficiency and that students did not require interview practice other than questions related to the “100 questions.” Many eligible immigrants did not seek naturalization largely because they were daunted by the English requirements and these classes merely confirmed their doubts.

Changes in 1996 welfare laws highlighted the need for citizenship instruction for students with diverse levels of English proficiency who did not have the time, inclination or ability to take years of ESL instruction in advance. Many immigrants needed to become citizens to avoid endangering their access to public benefits. Programs funded by IDHS and the Fund developed a broad range of ESL/Civics classes, including many that incorporated bilingual teachers and reading and writing instruction for the low-literate.

Programs for Special Populations

A number of providers customized their programs to meet the needs of special populations. Many CBOs with existing services for their ethnic elderly added or expanded educational services for this constituency that is highly vulnerable to losing eligibility for benefits under welfare reform. Members of one of the metropolitan Chicago area’s largest immigrant dominated-

²⁵Statistics are from IDHS. The Fund Executive Director Alice Cottingham stated that students served under their funding had a similar profile. There is no data available on students served through ISBE or SOS funds.

unions, the Union of Needlework Trades, Industrial, and Textile Workers (UNITE), were the focus of a program funded through the Northeastern Illinois University Teacher's Center. Classes are provided for members at the work site and on weekends in union headquarters. Union rights were incorporated into the traditional curriculum. One of the most unique educational programs, both in the state and nationwide, is the Deaf Adults Education Access Program, which provides instruction in American Sign Language (ASL), written English and citizenship content to adult Deaf immigrants.

CHICAGO AREA CITIZENSHIP PROVIDERS

*Programs that have been funded by IDHS and/or FIR through a direct contract or a subcontract to provide citizenship educational services THIS LISTS NEEDS TO BE SENT TO ED AND ALICE FOR REVIEW I ALSO SUGGEST CUTTING E_MAIL SINCE WE HAVE IT FOR SO FEW

***African Community United Methodist Church**

4754 N. Leavitt
Chicago, IL 60640
Contact: Reverend Kwadwo Ntim
Ph: (847) 497-3024
Fax: (847) 497-3805

***Albany Park Community Center**

5121 N. Kimball Ave.
Chicago, IL 60625
Ph: (773) 509-5650
Fax: (773) 509-5656

***American Association of Russian-Speaking Immigrants**

1132 W. Lunt. Ave., Suite 9-D
Chicago, IL 60626
Ph: (773) 338-5055
Fax: 338-5120

***Arab American Action Network**

3 148 W. 63rd St.
Chicago, IL 60629
Ph: (773) 436-4970
Fax: (773) 436-6460

***Association House**

2150 W. North Ave.
Chicago, IL 60647
Ph: (773) 276-0084
Fax: (773) 278-9071

***Assyrian National Council of Illinois**

2450 W. Peterson
Chicago, IL 60659
Ph: (773) 262-5589
Fax: (773) 262-0828

Back of the Yards Neighborhood Council

Citizenship Program
1751 W. 47th St., 2nd Floor
Chicago, IL 60609

Ph: (773) 523-4416
Fax: (773) 254-3525

**Belleville Area College
Adult Education Department**

2500 Carlyle Rd.
Belleville, IL 62221
Ph: (618) 235-2700
Fax: (618) 236-9563

Black Hawk College

301 42nd Ave.
East Moline, IL 61244
Ph: (309) 755-2200
Fax: (309) 755-9847

***Bosnian-Herzegovinian
American Cultural Center**

6574 N. Sheridan
Chicago, IL 60626
Ph: (773) 506-1179
Fax: (773) 274-6188
bhacc@msn.com

***Cambodian Association of
Illinois**

2831 W. Lawrence Ave,
Chicago, IL 60625
Ph: (773) 878-7090
Fax: (773) 878-5299

**Carl Sandburg College
Adult Literacy Coalition**

2232 S. Lake Storey Rd.
Galesburg, IL 61401
Ph: (309) 341-5330
Fax: (309) 344-1951

***Casa Aztlan**

1831 S. Racine
Chicago, IL 60608
Ph: (312) 666-5508

Fax: (312) 666-7829

***Centro Cristo Rey**

315 Root St.
Aurora, IL 60505
Ph: (630) 851-1890
Fax: (630) 585-6423

***Centro Romero**

6216 N. Clark St.
Chicago, IL 60660
Ph: (773) 508-5300
Fax: (773) 508-5399

***Centro Sin Fronteras**

1205 N. Milwaukee
Chicago, IL 60622
Ph: (773) 489-4483
Fax: (773) 772-9173

***Childserv Siga Center**

1103 Greenwood
Waukegan, IL 60087
Ph: (847) 263-2200
Fax: (847) 662-0663

***Chinese American Service League**

310 W. 24th Place
Chicago, IL 60616
Ph: (312) 808-7250
Fax: (312) 326-5244

***Chinese Mutual Aid Association**

1016 W. Argyle St.
Chicago, IL 60640
Ph: (773) 784-2900
Fax: (773) 784-2984

Christ Church

Episcopal Migration Ministries
410 Grand Ave.
Waukegan, IL 60085
Ph: (847) 662-7081
Fax: (847) 662-7173

***College of DuPage
ABE/ESL Office**
425 22nd St., Rm. OCC 131
Glen Ellyn, IL 60137
Ph: (630) 942-3697
Fax: (630) 942-3804

**College of Lake County
Adult Education Program**
19351 West Washington
Grayslake, IL 60030
Ph: (847) 543-2211
Fax: (847) 223-7690

***Deaf Adults Education Access
Program**
c/o Maureen Philbin
300 W. Washington, Suite 1200
Chicago, IL 60606
Ph: (312) 802-3566
Fax: (312) 802-3566
mphilbin@ameritech.net

***District 214 Community Education**
2121 S. Goebbert Rd.
Arlington Heights, IL 60005
Ph: (847) 718-7713
Fax: (847) 982-0747

***Dominican Literacy Center**
260 Vermont
Aurora, IL 60505

***Instituto del Progreso Latino**
2570 S. Blue Island
Chicago, IL 60608
Ph: (773) 890-0055
Fax: (773) 890-1537

***Interchurch Refugee and
Immigration Ministries**
4753 N. Broadway, Suite 401
Chicago, IL 60640
Ph: (773) 989-5647
Fax: (773) 989-0484

***Jewish Vocational Service
One South Franklin St.**
Chicago, IL 60606
Ph: (312) 357-4504
Fax: 855-3282

John Wood Community College
150 S. 48th St.
Quincy, IL 62301
Ph: (217) 224-6500 x4951
Fax: (217) 224-4208

***Joliet Junior College
Division of Adult and Family Services**
214 N. Ottawa
Joliet, IL 60432
Ph: (815) 280-1317
Fax: (815) 727-1529

Kankakee Community College
PO Box 888 River Road
Kankakee, IL 60901

Ph: (630) 898-4636
Fax: (630) 898-4636

***Elgin Community College
Fountain Square Campus**
51 S. Spring St.
Elgin, IL 60120
Ph: (847) 607-1000 x6950
Fax: (847) 931-3919

***Erie Neighborhood House**
1347 W. Erie St.
Chicago, IL 60622
Ph: (312) 666-3430
Fax: (312) 666-3955

**Evanston Township High School
Adult Education Program**
1600 Dodge Ave.
Evanston, IL 60204
Ph: (847) 492-3877

**Harper College
Adult Education Department**
1200 W. Algonquin Rd.
Palatine, IL 60067
Ph: (847) 925-6223
Fax: (847) 925-6048

Ph: (815) 933-0324
Fax: (815) 933-0217

***Korean American Community
Services**
4300 N. California Ave.
Chicago, IL 60618
Ph: (773) 583-5501
Fax: (773) 583-7009

***Korean American Senior Center**
4750 N. Sheridan Rd., Suite 400
Chicago, IL 60640
Ph: (773) 878-7272
Fax: (773) 878-4461

***Lao American Community
Services**
4250 N. Sheridan, Suite 320
Chicago, IL 60640
Ph: (773) 271-0004
Fax: (773) 271-1682

Latinos Progresando
1624 W. 18th St.
Chicago, IL 60608
Ph: (312) 850-0572
Fax: (312) 850-0576

Lawrence Education Center
101 E. Laurel
Springfield, IL 62704
Ph: (217) 525-3234
Fax: (217) 525-3090

**Heartland Alliance
Centro de Educacion y Cultura**
3452 W. Fullerton
Chicago, IL 60647
Ph: (773) 252-8715
Fax: (773) 252-8764

***Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society-
Chicago / Jewish Family and
Community Services
Moraine Valley Community
College**
One S. Franklin, Rm 411
Chicago, IL 60606
Ph: (312) 357-4666
Fax: (312) 855-3291

***Immigration Project**
P.O. Box 753
Granite City, IL 60240
Ph: (618) 452-7018
Fax: (618) 452-3549
Immpro@aol.com

Indo-American Center
6326 N. California
Chicago, IL 60659
Ph: (773) 973-4444
Fax: (773) 973-0157

Lincoln Land Community College
5250 Shepherd
Springfield, IL 62794
Ph: (217) 786-2349 or (800) 666-8325
Fax: (217) 786-2495

**Lyons Township Adult and Continuing
Education Center**
100 S. Brainard Ave.
La Grange IL 60525
Ph: (708) 354-5473
Fax: (708) 579-6726

**Malcolm X College
Adult Learning Skills Program**
1900 W. Van Buren
Chicago, IL
Ph: (312) 850-7300
Fax: (312) 850-7243

Meadows Community Services
2401 Kirchoff Road
Rolling Meadows, IL 60008
Ph: (847) 590-5984
Fax: (847) 590-9290

***Metropolitan Asian Services**
6532 N. Fairfield
Chicago, IL 60659
Ph: (773) 465-3105
Fax: (773) 465-0158

Midwest Asian American Center
2540 W. Devon
Chicago, IL 60659
Ph: (773) 262-8650

Fax: (773) 262-8651

Moraine Valley Community College
10900 X. 88th Ave.
Palos Hills, IL 60465
Ph: (708) 974-5340
Fax: (708) 974-1184

Morton College
ESL Program
3801 S. Central Ave.
Cicero, IL 60804
Ph: (708) 656-8000 x 792
Fax: (708) 656-8362

***Northeastern Illinois University**
Citizenship Empowerment Project,
Chicago Teacher's Center
770 N. Halsted
Chicago, IL 60622
Ph: (312) 733-7330 x 440
Fax: (312) 733-8188

Oakton Community College
Alliance for Lifelong Learning
7701 N. Lincoln Ave.
Skokie, IL 60077
Ph: (847) 635-1427
Fax: (847) 635-1427

Olive-Harvey College
South Chicago Learning Center
3055 E. 92nd St.
Chicago, IL 60617
Ph: (773) 291-6770
Fax: (773) 291-6773

Our Lady of the Americas
2610 N. Francisco
Chicago, IL 60647
Ph: (773) 235-1161

Pakistani American Association
6416 N. Leavitt
Chicago, IL 60645
Ph: (773) 973-6667
Fax: (773) 973-6668

***Polish American Association**
3834 N. Cicero
Chicago, IL 60641
Ph: (773) 282-1122
Fax: (773) 282-1324

Por Un Barrio Mejor
3444 W. 26th St.
Chicago, IL 60623
Ph: (773) 521-2157
Fax: (773) 521-0997

Prairie State College
202 S. Halsted St.
Chicago Heights, IL 60411

Ph: (708) 709-3719
Fax: (708) 709-3749

***Pui Tak Center**
2216 S. Wentworth
Chicago, IL 60616
Ph: (312) 328-1188, x21
Fax: (312) 328-7452

Rock Valley College
3301 N. Mulford
Rockford, IL 61114
Ph: (815) 395-6600, x314
Fax: (815) 395-1899

***Social Service Association for**
Neighborhood Arab American
Development (SANAD)
3302 W. 63rd St.
Chicago, IL 60629
Ph: (773) 436-7989
Fax: (773) 436-7989

***South-East Asia Center**
1134 W. Ainslie
Chicago, IL 60640
Ph: (773) 989-6927
Fax: (773) 989-4871

South Suburban College
Division of Community Education
15800 S. State St.
South Holland, IL 60437
Ph: (708) 596-2000 x2408
Fax: (708) 210-5770

***Southwest Youth Collaborative**
for Latino Organizations of the
Southwest
6400 S. Kedzie
Chicago, IL 60629
Ph: (773) 925-0397
Fax: (773) 476-3615

Spanish Coalition for Jobs
1737 W. 18th St.
Chicago, IL 60608
Ph: (312) 243-3030
Fax: (312) 243-9109

Township High School District
113
1040 Park Avenue West
Highland Park, IL 60035-2283
Ph: (847) 926-9316
Fax: (847) 926-9326

Triton College Community
Center, Nuevos Horizontes
133 N. Broadway
Melrose Park, IL 60171
Ph: (708) 343-9600
Fax: (708) 343-9605

Truman College
Adult Learning Skills Program
1145 W. Wilson
Chicago, IL 60640
Ph: (773) 907-4355
Fax: (773) 907-4364

Truman College/Lakeview Learning
Center, Adult Learning Skills Program
3310 N. Clark
Chicago, IL 60657
Ph: (773) 907-4400
Fax: (773) 907-4413

Urbana Adult Education Program
211 N. Race
Urbana, IL 61801
Ph: (217) 384-3530
Fax: (217) 337-4987

***Vietnamese Association of Illinois**
5252 N. Broadway
Chicago, IL 60629
Ph: (773) 925-0397
Fax: (773) 728-0497

Waubensee Community College Adult
Education
5 E. Galena Blvd.
Aurora, IL 60506
Ph: (630) 801-7900 x1110
Fax: (630) 906-4127

West Chicago High School, District 94
326 Joliet St.
West Chicago, IL 60185
Ph: (630) 293-8164
Fax: (630) 293-8120

Western Avenue Community Center
600 N. Western Ave.
Bloomington, IL 61701
Ph: (309) 829-9231
Fax: (309) 829-3910

***World Relief-Chicago**
3507 W. Lawrence Ave.
Chicago, IL 60187
Ph: (773) 583-3010
Fax: (773) 583-9410

***World Relief-DuPage**
Immigrant Services
1828 College Ave. #230
Wheaton, IL 60187
Ph: (630) 462-7566
Fax: (630) 462-8103

Collaborations

In order to encourage efficiency and promote quality, funders encouraged grantees to cooperate and share services, information and advocacy. As a result, several unique clusters of organizations came together to offer educational and other naturalization-related services. Some had worked together previously while for others it was a new relationship.

- The Latino Citizenship Collaborative was one of the first new collaborations, bringing together Latino CBOs offering citizenship educational services throughout the city of Chicago to the same constituency.
- The Coalition of Limited English Speaking Elderly (CLESE) has facilitated several interagency projects of elderly citizenship service providers.
- The Coalition of African, Asian and Latino Immigrants of Illinois (CAALII) initiated a broad-based collaboration of 16 (originally 13) multi-ethnic CBOs, offering educational services.
- In several geographical areas, clusters of programs have created efficiencies through referral networks for classes, volunteer tutor training, legal and application services. These service networks have provided a critical interchange of resources, mutual support, and expertise:
- In DuPage County, World Relief-DuPage, Exodus World Service, and the College of DuPage have each taken on a needed role in their community.
- Albany Park Community Center (APCC) and World Relief-Chicago work collaboratively in Chicago's Albany Park neighborhood.

Coalition of African, Asian and Latino Immigrants of Illinois (CAALII)
c/o Chinese Mutual Aid Association
1016 W. Argyle
Chicago, IL 60640
Ph: (773) 784-2900
Fax: (773) 784-2984

Coalition of Limited English Speaking Elderly
53 W. Jackson, Suite 1301
Chicago, IL 60604
Ph: (312) 461-0812
Fax: (312) 461-1466
clese-org@juno.com

Latino Citizenship Collaborative
c/o Instituto del Progreso Latino
2570 S. Blue Island
Chicago, IL 60608
Ph: (773) 890-0055
Fax: (773) 890-1537

Citizenship Tutor Training Providers

A number of organizations provide training to volunteer tutors who work with citizenship applicants in their geographical region or for a targeted constituency across a region. One provider, HIAS-Chicago, offers formal training in their tutor training model to providers across the country for a fee.

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- Literacy Works in Chicago for membership organizations
 - World Relief-DuPage and Exodus World Service in DuPage county
 - YWCA of Elgin and Literacy Connections in Elgin
 - Lincoln Land Community College in downstate Springfield
 - HIAS-Chicago provides training for tutors serving their Russian Jewish clientele as well as training other organizations in how to use their model for a fee including teacher/learner materials.

Literacy Connections
Gail Borden Public Library
200 North Grove
Elgin, IL 60120
Ph: (847) 742-6565
Fax: (847) 742-6599

Literacy Works
Magaret Cole, Director
1329 W. Wilson Ave.
Chicago, IL 60640
Ph: (773) 583-7154

World Relief-DuPage
Immigrant Services
1828 College Ave. #230
Wheaton, IL 60187
Ph: (630) 462-7566
Fax: (630) 307-1430

Lincoln Land Community College
5250 Shepherd
Springfield, IL 62794
Ph: (217) 786-2349 or (800) 666-8325
Fax: (217) 786-2495

HIAS-Chicago
Jewish Family and Community Services
One S. Franklin, Rm 411
Chicago, IL 60606
Ph: (312) 357-4666
Fax: (312) 855-3291

Educator Technical Assistance and Advocacy Facilitation Providers

Rationale for Technical Assistance to Educators

The experience of organizations in providing adult immigrant educational services varied significantly prior to offering naturalization preparation classes. Some had offered ESL classes or tutoring through funds from the State Legalization Impact Assistance Grant (SLIAG), the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), or the Secretary of State Literacy Office (SOS). A few had offered naturalization classes for many years. A number had been outreach educational sites for community colleges hosting classes but had not managed them directly. Still others were new to adult education but had developed expertise in addressing non-educational needs of the targeted population. IDHS and the Fund recognized that programs would have diverse needs; they funded a variety of experienced technical assistance agencies to help teachers and administrators to develop quality citizenship education programs.

Types of Technical Assistance Offered to Educators

Technical assistance is offered to educators on pedagogical, procedural, and legal issues. Several of the providers also facilitate related advocacy activities. The Adult Learning Resource Center (ALRC) is the principal citizenship teacher training agency. In addition, a number of the collaborations offer internal training for staff at their member agencies. The Midwest Immigrant Human Rights Center (MIHRC) is the central contact for problematic legal issues, while the Legal Assistance Foundation of Chicago (LAFC) specializes in representation of disability-related naturalization issues. The Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (ICIRR) provides general legal advice and also facilitates the interchange of ideas among diverse service providers at their monthly Citizenship and Immigration Committee meetings as well as monthly liaison with the Chicago INS. In addition, there are a number of smaller legal services providers: Centro Cristo Rey, Centro de Informacion, Centro Romero, Chicago Legal Clinic's Immigration Program, Sin Fronteras Law Project, World Relief-Chicago, and World-Relief-DuPage.

Rationale for Educators to be Involved in Advocacy

Many educators are either directly involved in or give input to advocacy efforts conducted by other organizations. This is because, in Illinois, immigrant advocates recognized the importance of having participation by all stakeholders in setting an advocacy agenda. When teachers have concerns, their voices

are heard and incorporated into a naturalization advocacy agenda.

Educator Involvement in Advocacy

Teachers have been particularly influential in insisting on the need for uniform testing standards so that they can appropriately prepare their students. They were successful in getting INS to develop both content and evaluation standards for the civics, reading, and writing components of the naturalization test.²⁶ Teachers have also been an important link in reporting problems with inconsistent and/or inappropriate test administration. Students bring many of these problems to their trusted teachers for help, and teachers share these issues with advocacy groups.

Types of Advocacy Facilitation Offered to Educators

Teachers have opportunities to give their input and/or be directly involved in the advocacy efforts of several organizations. They can report concerns at meetings as well as by phone or fax to targeted staff. While ICIRR is the principal immigrant advocacy organization, Access Living, ALRC, CLESE, and CAALII conduct advocacy together with ICIRR and separately.

Access Living

Access Living in partnership with ICIRR manages the Immigrants with Disabilities Rights Project. The project provides information for immigrants with disabilities on their rights and available resources. They also conduct advocacy on the rights of immigrants with disabilities with the INS and recently filed a discrimination complaint with the Department of Justice relative to INS treatment of Deaf naturalization applicants.

Adult Learning Resource Center (ALRC)

The ALRC offers a wide variety of training and technical assistance services to citizenship educators throughout the state.

ALRC Citizenship Workshop Menu

ALRC offers scheduled workshops on a fall, spring and summer calendar. They also offer customized workshops for small groups at any site, including the following:

²⁶ Many INS districts do not have well-defined testing standards and give individual INS adjudicators wide latitude in the evaluation of English and civics proficiency. Because they are not trained educators, the expectations may vary widely even within the same district office. This is particularly frustrating for citizenship preparation teachers who are uncertain of what content to cover and what level of proficiency students need to acquire for success.

Citizenship Basics: This is a multi-part series of workshops offers an orientation to the INS naturalization process, basic principles of teaching citizenship, instructional strategies, and classroom activities appropriate for different levels of ESL learners.

Citizenship Preparation for Low-Level Literacy and Elderly Students: This workshop begins with a discussion of the particular needs of these two groups and then provides strategies and techniques to help maximize their progress. The second workshop focuses on lesson planning, curriculum components, and reviewing and adapting teacher resources. Part 2 focuses on lesson planning, curriculum components, and reviewing and adapting resources.

Building Citizenship Dictation Skills and Building Citizenship Interview Skills: These two workshops focus on the main barriers to passing the naturalization test. Participants are introduced to effective instructional strategies and activities to build these skills.

Updating Instructional Materials for Citizenship Preparation: This workshop provides teachers and tutors with the opportunity to examine current procedures used by the INS in naturalization interviews and testing. The presenter demonstrates a variety of instructional activities that can be used in citizenship classes and/or in a tutorial situation. Commercial resources for citizenship preparation are reviewed and sample materials are adapted to the learning needs of different student profiles.

Intensive English for the Citizenship Interview: This workshop addresses the basic English listening and speaking skills required for the INS interview. Participants learn about and practice a variety of language activities that develop student communication skills.

Teaching Citizenship to the Low-Level Literacy Student: Assessment, Goal Setting and Tracking Progress: In this workshop, participants learn how to assess the knowledge and skills of students and to create appropriate instructional goals. The presenter demonstrates ways to monitor student progress and assure that appropriate and effective educational strategies are being used.

Building Internet User Skills for Citizenship Preparation: This workshop provides an introduction to the Internet for teachers and tutors involved in citizenship preparation. Participants learn how to access citizenship-related internet sites including the INS Home and Chicago pages, citizenship instructional sites, and ESL instructional sites and also learn how to download forms, locate appropriate pictures, and work with government sites. The

presenter addresses how to use these rich resources in planning citizenship lessons.

Creating Instructional Materials for Citizenship Preparation:

In this workshop participants make materials for citizenship classes and create accompanying activities appropriate for multilevel classes.

Building Citizenship Skills for Before and After

Naturalization: This workshop covers the curriculum of the citizenship preparation class including the INS interview and test, the role of citizenship, and the rights and responsibilities of new citizens. The workshop includes instructional strategies to build civic self-advocacy and the tools needed to access community information and work for changes.

Citizenship Preparation – Teaching the Multi-Level Class:

This workshop addresses the challenge of teaching citizenship students with widely varied skills. A variety of approaches are presented including student groups strategies, whole class activities that accommodate diverse skill levels, and peer-tutoring techniques. The strategic use of the mock interview is presented as a multilevel tool and used as a guide for creating sample lessons.

Citizenship Educators Interest Group

This group, open to citizenship teachers, tutors, volunteers and administrators, meets quarterly to build networks among citizenship educators. The purpose is to enhance professional practice and keep educators current in this constantly changing arena. Discussion and presentation on teaching strategies are regular components of these meetings. In addition, representatives from the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) regularly update the group on current test administration procedures.

Citizenship Hotline 1-800-321-9511

ALRC has a statewide citizenship hotline for applicants seeking classes, tutoring or legal services and also for potential volunteers. This feature is a component of ALRC's Illinois Adult Learning Resource Center hotline. It serves literacy students and also provides volunteer referrals throughout the state.

Citizenship Test Administration Advocacy

- ALRC works with teachers, administrators and ICIRR to advocate for fair and equitable testing procedures. ALRC has been involved in diverse advocacy activities:

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- In 1995, ALRC was a partner with ICIRR in advocating to establish standardized testing and evaluation standards for the civics and English reading/writing components of the naturalization test. As a result, the Chicago INS District now asks 10 questions; applicants must get six correct. They also facilitated the development of a list of words and sample dictations for the writing component of the test. Applicants must spell 60% of the words correctly in order to pass. Lastly, the reading requirement was limited to the list of civics content questions.
 - When INS implements changes in test administration, ALRC immediately advises teachers through their Web Page and contacts teachers in workshops and meetings, and through the ICIRR fax network of citizenship providers.
 - ALRC is a strong voice in advocating with the INS when new procedures have been introduced that violate naturalization statute or INS regulations. For example, when learners were asked to read the oath of allegiance out loud, ALRC pointed out to INS that the reading level was far above the “ordinary English” standard stated in the statute and that reading something correctly out loud was not an accurate measure of an individual’s comprehension. As a result, applicants are now asked to read the oath silently and explain it in their own words. (Unfortunately, on occasion, there are interviewers who violate this.)
 - ALRC is currently advocating with INS for a standardized interview procedure.

ALRC Citizenship Web Page

<http://www.thecenterWeb.org/adult/citizenship.htm>

The ALRC Citizenship Web Page currently provides the following:

- calendar of upcoming workshops
- time and location of upcoming Citizenship Educators Interest Group meeting and notes from previous meetings
- list of citizenship education technical assistance services
- citizenship materials bibliography
- sample citizenship materials
- interviews/test procedural updates
- current trends in interview questions
- news about the Chicago INS District and other news of interest
- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)
- related Internet Links

Other Technical Assistance Services

ALRC provides technical assistance by phone, e-mail and in-person. They answer specific questions and also provide assistance in areas such as the following:

- program set up
- materials development
- materials selection
- learner assessment
- materials selection
- curriculum
- materials preparation
- multi-level classroom management
- computer use and software programs

Coalition of African, Asian and Latino Immigrants of Illinois (CAALII)

This coalition provides a range of services for its partner agencies as well as others who do not receive direct funding but are interested in participating. Ideas for services and advocacy steps are developed and planned at monthly meetings of partner agencies.

Basic Citizenship Teacher Training: This training session is taught by teachers and caseworkers within CAALII using materials developed by CAALII teachers and others. An additional component of the training is observation of classes and mentoring by more experienced teachers at different CAALII sites.

Teacher Exchange: Teachers are offered the opportunity to teach a class with an ethnic group and in a community different than the one they are currently working in. For example, a teacher in a Chinese CBO will teach a class at a Latino CBO in a different community. CAALII also incorporates cultural sharing into the experience through neighborhood tours, an ethnic meal, etc.

Materials Exchange: CAALII has collected lesson plans from teachers at different member organizations that are available for use by member agencies.

Lending Library: CAALII maintains a lending library of citizenship-related materials for member agencies.

Teacher Training Workshops with ALRC: CAALII plans customized teacher training workshops together with ALRC.

This has included workshops in which teachers from member organizations share activity ideas.

Materials Development: CAALII has professionally produced a flashcard and audiotape set developed by one of its teachers. They offer it to member organizations for a nominal price. Recently CAALII received seed money to disseminate it to a larger market. In the future, they also hope to publish a bingo game developed by another teacher at a partner agency.

Civic Participation Curriculum: CAALII developed a civic participation curriculum that is being field-tested by three of its members organizations. Once finalized, they hope to disseminate it widely.

Media campaign: At the urging of its membership, CAALII will soon begin a media campaign to increase citizenship applications and enrollment in citizenship classes.

Teacher/Learner Advocacy Participation: CAALII has organized teachers and learners to participate in advocacy actions of concern to their individual constituencies.

INS Advisory Council Project: After CAALII partner agencies gathered over 1000 complaints from their constituents about INS dealings, they proposed the formation of an INS Advisory Council to systematically address these concerns. CAALII members are currently working with elected officials and others to establish the Council.

Coalition for Limited English Speaking Elderly (CLESE)

CLESE has offered a number of forms of technical assistance to its members and also advocated for the test administration needs of its constituency.

The following are some of their key technical assistance activities for elderly citizenship providers, many of whom offer educational services:

- Rewrite important naturalization-related information learned from other providers in simplified English for service providers and create own materials where needed. Some documents have been translated into as many as 11 languages.
- Relay important naturalization-related information to membership orally with a careful explanation of terms, including information from INS at CBO meetings.

-
- Bring elderly constituency concerns to the attention of INS and advocate as needed.
 - Provide forum for elderly naturalization service providers to share best practices in service provision.
 - Advocated for officer sensitivity training on issues affecting the elderly in interview including test administration. As a result, CLESE's recommendations will soon be incorporated into core INS officer training.

Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (ICIRR)

The ICIRR offers diverse forms of technical assistance and advocacy expertise as well as facilitating communication among providers.

Citizenship and Immigration Committee: This committee of citizenship application, legal, and education providers meets monthly to discuss late breaking updates on citizenship and immigration issues and to provide a forum to discuss and organize coordinated responses to recent developments including test administration.

Citizenship Illinois: This quarterly newsletter provides updates and explanations of legal and procedural citizenship-related issues and also highlights promising educational programs and exceptional staff and volunteers.

Illinois Citizenship Services Directory: ICIRR has published and regularly updated this directory for five years. The directory provides the following information:

- a listing of service providers by geographical area
- languages spoken by agency staff
- services offered at the agency, including citizenship application services/workshops; citizenship classes; and other citizenship services
- fees for services

Technical Assistance: ICIRR provides diverse products and services:

- answers to naturalization-related legal and procedural questions via phone, e-mail, and fax
- presentations and trainings on immigration and citizenship legal and procedural issues
- legal and procedural support to ALRC at selected workshops

- articles on naturalization-related issues for publication in teacher journals such as *TESOL Matters*
- workshops on immigration and citizenship-related legal and procedural issues at adult educator conferences
- fax updates on immigration policy developments
- outreach to mainstream and ethnic media

Advocacy: ICIRR provides the following:

- state and federal legislative advocacy on citizenship and other immigration issues
- written comments on federal regulations affecting immigration
- advocacy with officials at INS headquarters regarding national immigration policies
- advocacy with the local INS office regarding naturalization interview procedures, disability accommodations, and other issues.

Illinois Citizenship Technical and Advocacy Assistance Providers

Adult Learning Resource Center
1855 Mt. Prospect Rd.
Des Plaines, IL 60018
Ph: (847) 803-3535
Fax: (847) 803-3231

Centro de Informacion
62 S. Grove Ave.
Elgin, IL 60120
Ph: (847) 695-9050
Fax: (847) 931-7991
centroelg@aol.com

Centro Cristo Rey
315 N. Root St.
Aurora, IL 60502
Ph: (630) 851-1890
Fax: (630) 851-3625

Centro Romero
6216 N. Clark St.
Chicago, IL 60660
Ph: (773) 508-5300
Fax: (773) 508-5399

Chicago Legal Clinic, Immigration Program
2938 E. 91st St.

Coalition of African, Asian, and Latino Immigrants of Illinois
c/o Chinese Mutual Aid Association
1016 W. Argyle
Chicago, IL 60640
Ph: (773) 784-2900
Fax: (773) 784-2984

Chicago, IL 60617
Ph: (773) 731-1762
Fax: (773) 791-4264

Coalition of Limited English Speaking Elderly
53 W. Jackson, Suite 1301
Chicago, IL 60604
Ph: (312) 461-0812
Fax: (312) 461-1466
clese-org@juno.com

**Heartland Alliance
Midwest Immigrant and Human Rights Center**
208 S. LaSalle, Suite 1818
Chicago, IL 60604
Ph: (312) 660-1370
Fax: (312) 660-1505
Mirc@tia-mirc.org

Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights
36 S. Wabash, Suite 1425
Chicago, IL 60603
Ph: (312) 332-7360
Fax: (312) 332-7044

Immigration Project of the Legal Assistance Foundation of Chicago
111 W. Jackson Blvd.
Chicago, IL 60604
Ph: (312) 347-8374
Fax: (312) 347-1041

Sin Fronteras Law Program
1205 N. Milwaukee
Chicago, IL 60622
(773) 489-4483
(773) 227-6370

World Relief Chicago
3507 W. Lawrence Ave.
Chicago, IL 60625
Ph: (773) 583-9191
Fax: (773) 583-9410

**World Relief DuPage
Immigrant Services**
1828 College Ave. #230
Wheaton, IL 60187
Ph: (630) 462-7566
Fax: (630) 307-1430

IV: Technical Assistance and Advocacy Facilitation for Citizenship Educators

Introduction

Illinois has made a substantive investment in technical assistance for citizenship providers including special services specifically targeted to educators. This section addresses the five key areas in which Illinois provides technical assistance for citizenship instructors:

1. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) Policies and Procedures
2. Providing Advice on Legal Issues
3. Test-Administration Related Advocacy with INS
4. Disability Issues
5. Teacher Professional Development
 - (a) Assessment of Teacher Needs
 - (b) Citizenship Teacher Training Opportunities,
 - (c) Impact of Professional Development Activities on Citizenship Instruction.

Each area and subsection is outlined in the following manner:

- A key issue, followed by a short description
- An explanation of what it takes to be effective, based on current research or program experience.
- Promising practices, that are likely to make a difference observed in Illinois programs.
- At the end of the chapter are listed concerns that were identified by the researchers or expressed as challenges by teachers and administrators and recommendations on what needs to be done at various levels to build a more effective system.

INS Policies and Procedures

Description

An integral part of citizenship education is preparing students for the ever-changing INS policies and procedures, which include when and how to submit an application, getting fingerprinted, the interview and test administration, the final swearing-in ceremony, and how to address problems. INS has made many changes in policies and procedures over the past five years,

oftentimes without advance notice, making it difficult for teachers and clients to stay up-to-date.

What It Takes To Be Effective

To be effective, administrators and teachers need to have up-to-date, easily accessible information on local and national INS policies and procedures. Teachers often provide an overview of the requirements and procedures to their students with a focus on test administration and the interview. Current testing content and procedures form the backbone of their curriculum. In addition, because they often have the closest and most regular contact with students, teachers are a critical link in communicating procedural changes to the field.

To be effective, administrators and teachers need to have up-to-date, easily accessible information on local and national INS policies and procedures.

► Promising Practices

Illinois has extensive information sharing networks to communicate existing policies and procedures to classroom teachers and to identify changes. The changes include both those announced in advance and those implemented without warning, sometimes intentionally and other times in error. If teachers are well-prepared and up-to-date on policy, students get accurate, current information, allowing them to anticipate what to expect at the interview.

Information is shared with teachers through networks established between the Illinois Coalition for Immigration and Refugee Rights (ICIRR) and the Adult Learning Resource Center (ALRC). ICIRR initially developed basic information on the process; ALRC adapted it for their constituency of classroom teachers and educational administrators. The information is transmitted through workshops, quarterly meetings of the Citizenship Educator Interest Group and ALRC's citizenship educators' Web Page at:

<http://www.thecenterWeb.org/adult/citizenship.htm>

On the Web Page, ALRC includes, "Interviews/Test Procedural Updates," "Current Trends in Interview Questions," and notes from previous Interest Group meetings. ALRC also has developed and regularly updates a role-play script of the interview.

The Chicago INS Office also has a Web Page at:

<http://www.ins.usdoj.gov/graphics/fieldoffices/chicago/index.htm>

Dissemination of Up-To-Date Information on Policies and Procedures

- ICIRR's *Citizenship Illinois*, a free quarterly newsletter, includes articles explaining naturalization procedures and recent changes in policies and procedures.
- At the monthly meetings of the Citizenship and Immigration Committee, representatives from ICIRR and ALRC relay any new or impending policy and/or procedural changes. ICIRR faxes meeting notes to all of its member organizations and other allies.
- ICIRR provides written reports of the INS CBO meetings.
- Any important policy or procedural changes or proposed changes are immediately sent out in Faxbriefs to ICIRR's service provider network.
- ALRC tracks changes reported by citizenship teachers. Many teachers encourage their students to report back experiences after the interview. Teachers report anything unusual to ALRC who can then take note of any common trends. This information is then communicated back to the field and also to INS for explanation and clarification.
- Smaller provider networks and program administrators disseminate the information provided by ALRC and ICIRR to their constituencies. For example, the Coalition of Limited English Speaking Elderly brings information to their provider meetings, and the Coalition of African, Asian, and Latino Immigrants of Illinois does to theirs.
- Consultant Aliza Becker and ICIRR citizenship staff wrote five articles on citizenship-related topics and four articles on immigration and welfare reform for *TESOL Matters* between 1996 and 1999. The newsletter is distributed to more than 15,000 members and affiliates of the international organization, Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL).

Providing Advice on Legal Issues

Description

Questions on legal issues relate to the legal interpretation of information INS uses to make their decisions on naturalization applications. Legal questions may emerge in a number of contexts within the classroom and quite often teachers review the

meaning of certain legal issues when they review with students how to answer questions on the *N-400, Application for Naturalization*. Teachers need to know the parameters within which they can give advice on these issues. Well-meaning but incorrect advice on a naturalization-related topic can result in serious legal problems for students and possibly a charge of fraud. Because of the trusting bond students develop with their teachers, they may ask their teachers a range of legal questions and also confide potentially problematic information that requires further review by a legal expert.

What It Takes To Be Effective

Teachers should provide general information about the citizenship process and not attempt to interpret how that information applies to a specific individual. Filling out an N-400 citizenship application for a student in many cases will involve providing legal advice for which teachers are not qualified.

Teachers need information to determine when to encourage a student to seek legal counsel. To do so, they need access to free or low-cost legal information for their students through referrals, in-house staff or guest speakers.

ICIRR, ALRC, and CAALII provide basic information on the meaning of the questions on the N-400 naturalization application at their introductory training sessions. They also emphasize that a layperson such as a teacher should not attempt to answer case specific applicant questions.

► Promising Practices

The Chicago metropolitan area has a network of nonprofit and for profit immigration assistance for naturalization applicants. ICIRR includes specific information on nonprofits offering citizenship-related legal services through its free *Illinois Citizenship Services Directory*. The largest providers are Heartland Alliance's Midwest Immigrant & Human Rights Center (MIHRC) and ICIRR. They both have designated staff to answer naturalization-related questions from providers. MIHRC also offers phone consultation for immigrants and provides low-cost legal representation in problematic cases for low-income individuals. Both MIHRC and ICIRR maintain lists of pre-screened immigration lawyers for referrals.

Other free or low-cost providers include:

- Centro Cristo Rey
- Centro de Informacion
- Centro Romero
- Chicago Legal Clinic, Immigration Program
- Legal Assistance Foundation of Chicago

- Sin Fronteras Law Project
- World Relief-Chicago
- World Relief-DuPage

ICIRR, ALRC, and CAALII provide basic information on the meaning of the questions on the N-400 naturalization application at their introductory training sessions. They also emphasize that a layperson such as a teacher should not attempt to answer case specific applicant questions. ICIRR covers “red flag” or potentially problematic issues in its training.

Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, Chicago (HIAS-Chicago) provides teachers for interview practice copies of students actual N-400s that were submitted to INS.²⁷

Test Administration-Related Advocacy with INS

Description

In Illinois, advocacy for fair and equitable treatment of applicants during the INS exam is an integral part of the citizenship effort. For many years, citizenship advocates have had a whole range of concerns relative to the manner in which INS has handled naturalization applicants. Some teachers can and do become involved in this long list of concerns. However, the main advocacy-related issue for educators is the manner in which INS conducts the interview, including the English and civics test. Teachers can prepare their students most effectively when they know the content of the test, the evaluation standards, the procedures used to administer the test, due consideration provisions of INS regulations, and possible accommodations for students with disabilities.

Another important component of test-related advocacy for teachers is preparing students to advocate for themselves in the process. Teachers ought to train students to be self-advocates during the actual interview and also to report back to teachers any apparent inconsistencies in test administration. This information may direct individual and/or group post-interview advocacy. Post-interview advocacy is critical for educational efforts whether handled by teachers, other agency staff, or professional advocates.

To be effective, administrators, teachers, and professional advocates need to work with INS to establish a standard test content, evaluation standards, and test administration procedure.

²⁷ The N-400 is the basis of the interview, so it is important for teachers to know how applications responded, to maintain consistency and accuracy in class practice.

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What It Takes To Be Effective

To be effective, administrators, teachers, and professional advocates need to work with INS to establish a standard test content, evaluation standards, and test administration procedure. There must also be systematic follow-up of those standards and related policies and procedures involving students, teachers, and others in a coordinated effort.

► Promising Practices

In 1996, staff from ALRC, ICIRR, and the Heartland Alliance for Human Needs and Human Rights negotiated with INS to standardize the content and evaluation of what was then a multiple choice test and dictation. When INS switched to an oral test, ICIRR and ALRC worked with INS to maintain similar standards for the test content, dictation, and reading components of the exam. ALRC and a group of educators are currently continuing advocacy with INS to standardize the oral English in the interview.

Other examples of promising practices include the following:

- ICIRR advocates with INS when new procedures do not follow immigration statute and/or INS regulations.
- A number of individual teachers, program administrators, attorneys, and Bureau of Immigration Appeals (BIA) Accredited Representatives have successfully advocated for students/applicants with INS and elected officials.
- ALRC is involved in two test-administration-related advocacy efforts:
 - a. teaching students to be self-advocates at the INS interview in some of their training workshops.
 - b. developing three forms for teachers and program administrators to use in assisting their students to be appropriately interviewed and to address problems that occurred at the interview. They are all typed so they can be easily duplicated on agency letterhead.

Citizenship Applicants Information Form: This form is to request that the INS adjudicator grant special accommodations and/or due consideration to the applicant during the interview. The applicant gives it to the adjudicator at the beginning of the interview. According to ALRC's Peggy Dean, "it serves as a nice

A number of teachers interviewed stated they did not believe there was anything they could do when students were asked inappropriate questions at the INS interview or when procedures violated the

introduction to the applicant during the interview and has been very successful.”

Request for Supervisory Review of an Interview: This form is to be completed for an applicant who believes he or she was denied citizenship in error at the interview and had not previously requested review by a supervisor. For example, the examiner may have read a dictation sentence that was not from the required 30, read the dictation sentence too fast, used an old list of civic questions, or made an apparently discriminatory or rude remark that unnerved the applicant. The form may be submitted immediately following the interview or as many as six months later if the problem takes that long to emerge.

INS Customer Service Incident Report. This form is used to report any problems that happened at the interview even if the student passed the test. The student usually fills it out immediately after the interview usually with the teacher’s assistance.

Teacher Comments Attest to the Range of Perspectives on the Need for Advocacy

“Recently a student of ours was told he passed, and then got a letter saying he failed. What do you do? There needs to be a formal appeal process, a place to voice confusion over not passing the test. The lack of an appeal process hurts students and takes integrity out of the whole process.”

– David De La Fuente, Elgin Community College

“There is a need for advocacy in terms of how clients are treated. There is little uniformity. It is arbitrary and inconsistent according to the mood of the examiner.”

– Carlos Arango, Casa Aztlan

“We need to know what to do with our students after they fail the test. We don’t know what they need to improve for the next test. Can’t INS tell the teachers what to do?”

– Tyler Pham, Vietnamese Association of Illinois

“Last week a student failed for what appeared to be an outrageous reason. I don’t know what to do. I cry with them. I wish I knew what INS really expected.”

– Kiri Salazar, Vietnamese Association of Illinois

Disability Issues

Description

Disabilities can impact a citizenship applicant’s ability to pass the citizenship test if not appropriately accommodated. INS is required to tailor its services to the needs of all people with disabilities. Legally this requirement comes from the

Rehabilitation Act of 1973 in what is commonly known as Section 504, which mandates federal agencies to provide equal access to persons with disabilities. While this law has been in existence more than 25 years, INS does not yet have a comprehensive plan to provide appropriate accommodations to people with disabilities to ensure equal access.

What It Takes to Be Effective

Service providers need to be vigilant in identifying learners with all types of disabilities, helping them request appropriate accommodations and monitoring INS to assure officers follow through appropriately. Because they have such close regular contact with students, teachers can sometimes identify disabilities that may have not been previously identified.

► Promising Practices

- ALRC addressed the issue of learning disabilities at an educator interest group meeting. The center offered strategies on how to teach people with learning disabilities and how to request accommodations at the interview. Staff also wrote an article about it for *Citizenship Illinois*.
- The Immigrants with Disabilities Rights Project (IDRP), a partnership between Access Living and ICIRR, focuses on disability issues including the obligation of INS to provide appropriate accommodations for people with disabilities.
- The Deaf Adults Education Access Program (DAEAP) has worked with INS to establish special interview days for deaf applicants in which they are interviewed and sworn in on the same day. INS economizes on interpreters and deaf applicants are given appropriate accommodations.

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Teacher Professional Development

Background

Professional development of citizenship education teachers is unusually challenging work given the background of many teachers. Unlike the K-12 system, many citizenship teachers do not have any previous training or experience teaching ESL or citizenship, and many lack adult teaching experience. Some citizenship teachers do not have strong English skills themselves limiting what they are able to learn in formal workshops conducted by native speakers. Citizenship teachers are part-time

hourly employees and few are paid preparation time. Many teachers hold a full-time job in addition to their teaching responsibilities. Those with professional degrees or certificates in teaching English to speakers of other languages generally seek work in community colleges, universities or the K-12 system where they receive compensation commensurate with their training as opposed to CBOs.

Some supervisors in projects funded by IDHS and the Fund also tend to have little or no experience in teacher supervision and evaluation. Many do not value teacher training and do not consider it a priority.

Teacher professional development is available to all IDHS and FIR funded programs free of charge and for a small fee to ISBE-funded programs. ALRC is the principal provider for staff development, although some agencies provide in-house training, sometimes in conjunction with ALRC.

Introduction

This section begins with an explanation of the seven draft “Principles of Effective Professional Development” of the National Reporting System (NRS). It then discusses significant aspects of staff development for citizenship education, including (1) assessment of teacher needs, (2) training opportunities for teachers, and (3) the impact of staff development on citizenship instruction. The section concludes with recommendations for technical assistance and advocacy facilitation followed by recommendations to funders.

Principles of Effective Professional Development²⁸

1. Targets a real need of participants.

This principle assumes that needs assessments and collaborative planning are used in the determination of topics of professional development and are not just a “hot new idea” that is administratively selected.

2. Is spaced over time with interim activities or is continuous in nature.

If change in behavior is the objective of professional development, one-shot events do not effectively achieve that goal. There needs to be an opportunity for participants to try out new practices on their own and to evaluate the results.

²⁸ “Principles of Effective Professional Development” H-18a, Professional development on the National Reporting System for Adult Education Training Materials. Last updated 12/29/99.
<http://www.air-dc.org/nrs/trainingmaterials.htm>

To this end, several approaches to professional development may be used. These approaches include a series of workshops, on-going action research, observation-feedback (including mentoring or coaching), and program or project development (such as curriculum development or program revision that requires research and development).

3. Is related to mission and program goals.

Professional development by the nature of the term is NOT personal development. Professional development, therefore, should be related to the professional role of participants – in most cases, the teaching-learning process in relation to the goals of the organization.

4. Provides opportunities for participants to learn about the theory and research behind new practices.

Most practitioners are not willing to change their behavior simply because someone in authority tells them to do so. Participants need to know what research indicates will be the results of their changed behavior or at least what theoretical constructs are the foundations for change. Such presentations need to be dynamic, informed and illustrative.

5. Involves effective presenters who use practical, hands-on, how-to activities.

Unless information is the only professional development goal, workshop presentations are often important but not sufficient to bring about changes in practice. Professional development often involves presentations, (Most approaches begin with workshop sessions that present theory and research, provide an overview of the needs and procedures that will be employed, or involve problem-solving related to the professional development that will follow.) Several presenter characteristics are crucial:

- A presenter who is respected, articulate, experienced, and charismatic.
- A presenter who is well-organized, prepared, and relaxed.
- A presenter who has a sense of humor (including the ability to laugh at themselves) and who respects the contributions of participants.
- Presentations should be brief (20 min. maximum), interspersed with small group, hands-on activities. These

may involve problem-solving, peer teaching, manipulation of objects or data, participant role-playing, demonstrations and the like.

- 6. Allows participants to practice new skills and strategies in a safe environment and to receive constructive feedback from a chosen peer or other trusted professional.**

Teaching, like any acquired skill or art form, requires continuous observation and practice with opportunities to alter less-effective strategies for new ones without being penalized for experimentation. It is important that peer coaches or mentors be self-selected or at least agreeable partners.

- 7. Results in increased learning gains by students or more efficient practices by other staff.**

Although it is difficult to determine a cause-effect relationship between most professional development activities and learners' gains, overall patterns can be observed and recorded. For example, one study that tested learning gains of students and correlated them with instructor competencies, found that instructors scoring high in "organization for instruction" and "monitoring student progress" also had learners who made significantly greater learning gains.

Assessment of Teacher Needs

Description

A teacher needs assessment is a comprehensive process that identifies the needs of real teachers, including experienced teachers and those new to the job.

What It Takes to Be Effective

Effective assessment of teacher needs seeks input from all stakeholders, including administrators, staff developers, and in some cases funders.

► Promising Practices

ALRC sends agencies offering citizenship classes a needs survey every year and carefully notes needs identified by teachers calling for help to assist in program planning.

CAALIII has monthly meetings of teachers and program administrators to discuss internal training needs.

Citizenship Teacher Training Opportunities

Description

Most beginning citizenship teachers are new to teaching adults, immigrants and/or ESL, and many have little familiarity with citizenship content. Those who have been teaching longer can benefit from opportunities to improve their craft and/or share their knowledge with others.

What It Takes to be Effective

Effective citizenship training incorporates accurate content, ESL and special populations teaching strategies, and other related topics. The training is readily accessed by teachers and meets their ongoing needs. It is integrated into a program, rather than external to it.

► Promising Practices

- ALRC has developed a diverse series of citizenship teacher training workshops and other consultations on a wide range of topics. Many teachers and administrators reported that ALRC's diverse menu of workshops met an important need. The praise was particularly emphatic for the workshops series targeted to the new citizenship teachers, the workshop on teaching the low-literate and special needs students, and the workshop on how to use the Internet.
- ALRC and CAALII regularly work together to provide teacher professional development opportunities for CAALII's 16 member agencies.
- ALRC offers two workshop series that progressively build expertise, one for beginning citizenship teachers and the other for special needs students.
- ALRC workshops and consultations are available over an extended period of time.
- CAALII works with the member teachers and administrators to address professional development needs.
- ALRC offers continuous professional development through its quarterly Citizenship Educator's Interest Group meetings.

ALRC has pioneered the use of the Internet as an aid to citizenship teacher professional development.

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- ALRC offers workshops at suburban, downtown Chicago, and community sites.
 - Most ALRC workshops and meetings are two to three hours, thereby allowing teachers to accommodate other commitments.
 - ALRC has pioneered the use of the Internet as an aid to citizenship teacher professional development. Their Internet classes include informative web sites on citizenship issues as well as how to download visuals for instruction.
 - Pui Tak Center has worked with ALRC to integrate ongoing teacher professional development into their program design enhancing the provision of quality instruction.
 - CAALII provides opportunities for teachers to observe each other's classes

Impact of Professional Development Activities on Citizenship Instruction

Description

The purpose of citizenship teacher professional development is to improve the quality of instruction.

What It Takes to Be Effective

Effective staff development increases teachers' knowledge, and expands the repertoire of teaching skills. Most importantly, it results in positive changes in teachers' behaviors in the classroom and increased participation and engagement by students.

► Promising Practices

Many of the teachers interviewed said they successfully incorporated activities learned at ALRC training sessions into their classes.

Illinois has more extensive citizenship teacher development activities than other parts of the country. ALRC has received requests for assistance from educators throughout the country.

Illinois has more extensive citizenship teacher development activities than other parts of the country. ALRC has received requests for assistance from educators throughout the country.

Technical Assistance and Advocacy Facilitation Concerns

INS Policies and Procedures Concerns

In spite of an elaborate and noteworthy network of information sharing around naturalization updates, a number of teachers interviewed were not aware of this resource. We saw teachers misrepresenting procedural information to their students on several occasions, indicating that dissemination of information is limited.

ALRC's citizenship educator's Web Page provides critical up-to-date information on the citizenship process. It allows teachers to directly access information rather than depend on colleagues who are often overburdened with other responsibilities. At the time interviews were conducted, however, information about the existence of the Web Page was not widely known. Several teachers and administrators noted the need for a citizenship for educators, unaware that ALRC had already created one.

There is a need for ALRC's Web Page to be readily identified through common search engines. One teacher had done extensive Internet searches for the kind of information provided on ALRC's Web Page, but had not found it. We had a similar experience.

Over the course of the study, a number of programs gained Internet access, but some are still not connected. There is a need for access to the Internet among all programs to gain ready access to the most current information for teachers on policies and procedures, information that is not as readily available otherwise.

Providing Advice on Legal Issues Concerns

We observed teachers advising students how to fill out their N-400 without inquiring as the specifics of their situation. In two classes students were told to answer "no" to all questions in Part 7 and "yes" to all questions in Part 8. While these are the most common answers, they don't necessarily apply in all situations e.g. selective service registration. If students answer a question on the application differently in the interview than they have written on their application, they may be denied citizenship.

One teacher was observed providing inaccurate legal advice to students on several occasions during the observed class. During class a student asked a specific legal question. The teacher said he would get the student the name of a private attorney, rather than first refer the student to a qualified free telephone

There is a need for access to the Internet among all programs to gain ready access to the most current information for teachers on policies and procedures, information that is not as readily available otherwise.

In Illinois, advocacy for fair and equitable treatment of applicants during the INS exam is an integral part of the citizenship effort.

consultation or a staff member who could call for free or low-cost advice. (One reader commented that many of the groups funded to provide free or low-cost legal assistance did not return her phone calls.) When a student brought up a “red flag” issue in class, the teacher didn’t take notice.

In most classes students did not have a copy for referral of the N-400 they submitted to INS. In several cases they were uncertain how they had responded to questions on the application.

Test Administration-Related Advocacy with INS Concerns

- A number of teachers interviewed stated they did not believe there was anything they could do when students were asked inappropriate questions at the INS interview or when procedures violated the standards outlined by INS. From our interviews, it did not appear that many teachers were familiar with the ALRC forms. One agency said they were developing their own approach to use with interview problems along with other agencies. An ALRC staff person also reported that a number of teachers were reluctant to use the forms, because of the time it would take and it would be on their own time.
- Many of the teachers interviewed did not instruct their students to advocate with the INS as part of their curriculum. Some who did, found it difficult to communicate the concept of advocacy to students who had previous negative experiences challenging authority in their native country. They requested additional instructional tools to coach students in this important arena.

Disability Issues Concerns

- Learning disabilities continue to be a concern for a number of teachers. Some believe that their students are unable to pass the current citizenship test even if accommodations are provided.
- One teacher recounted how a student had failed the test the previous week because he couldn’t hear the adjudicator. When the teacher was asked if he had referred the student to another staff member for assistance in requesting an accommodation, he replied, “That’s not my job. It’s theirs.”
- Two administrators stated that they would like to have wheelchair accessible bathrooms for disabled learners but did not have funding to support the cost.

Assessment of Teacher Needs Concerns

Several stakeholders stated that the annual ALRC citizenship educator's survey did not allow them to express many of their concerns and needs. One teacher said, "The surveys were much too long, intimidating and time consuming and ALRC had already decided the categories." A number of programs said they did not fill it out at all.

Many providers had not budgeted or planned for teacher professional development. It was assumed that teachers "knew what they were doing". Others felt that because teachers were part-time and turnover high, that training was not a priority. Professional development is often offered as an option that teachers can attend on their own unpaid time. Very few are able to do this. This situation is common in the adult literacy field.

Two providers expressed reserve about working with ALRC, because they had tried their recommended strategies and found them to be ineffective with their student population. One teacher said that ALRC should establish more cooperative relationships with teachers rather than give the impression, "this is what you should do."

ALRC gathers needs data by observing some citizenship classes and their annual survey. This provides a limited picture of the actual needs, especially from CBOs who do not currently use their services or use them nominally. They do not have a systematic plan for collection of data regarding teacher and learner needs and strategies.

Citizenship Teacher Training Concerns

- ALRC has accommodated their training to the realities of a field in which few programs have committed resources to teacher professional development and most teachers are part-time. Short-term workshops, though less effective, have been the most prevalent model because they allow teachers to learn information intensively in a short period of time and most programs have budgeted little to no money for teacher professional development.
- A number of people expressed concern that the current workshop model did not provide opportunities for participants to provide direct input into its design.

Professional development is often offered as an option that teachers can attend on their own unpaid time. Very few are able to do this.

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- Stakeholders expressed a need for more alternative learning opportunities. The workshop model has limitations as a short-term, one-shot event. Two teachers stated that there was an implicit assumption that people learned best through formal workshops when in fact they preferred other learning models.
 - When observed, a number of the teachers stated that they would like structured feedback on their performance but were not aware if such assistance existed. It appeared that most program administrators were not involved in evaluating or coaching teachers on their performance.
 - Several people said that they had problems implementing activities learned at workshops and would like a video for reference.
 - Many teachers expressed frustration with the fact that their students had low levels of English. One stated, “I am not an ESL teacher and don’t know what to do.”
 - Teachers struggled with issues related to classroom management and ESL instruction in a number of classes observed.
 - Many teachers were not aware of the broad range of training and consultation services offered by ALRC.
 - Two teachers who worked Monday through Friday and taught on Saturday expressed the need for professional development that accommodated their schedules. They suggested videos of effective practice they could watch at home and/or classroom observation and coaching from professional trainers. Two teachers expressed the need for basic citizenship training for volunteers during the evenings when most are available.

Many teachers expressed frustration with the fact that their students had low levels of English. One stated, “I am not an ESL teacher and don’t know what to do.”

Impact of Professional Development Activities on Citizenship Instruction Concerns

Currently, there is no information available on the impact of staff development efforts on citizenship education. There is no data that might show which strategies teachers are implementing and what the effect of training on classroom dynamics might be.

Technical Assistance and Advocacy Facilitation Recommendations

Program Recommendations

Program administrators should share updated information on policies and procedures directly with their teachers or show them how to access such information. This can be accomplished through the ALRC citizenship educator's Web Page, information disseminated through ICIRR's fax network, and attendance at relevant meetings. Then administrators should monitor the presentation of such information to students to assure accuracy and completeness.

Programs should provide teachers with resources to address student application processing and other legal needs. These might include a referral to organizations that provide quality free or low cost application processing and/or legal assistance, referrals to qualified staff within the agency, on-site application processing workshops, guest speakers, or paid teacher time to contact experts with specific questions.

Programs should stress to teachers that providing legal advice is inappropriate and can potentially be dangerous to students, in extreme cases resulting in an order of deportation.

Programs that provide application processing in-house or in cooperation with other agencies should routinely provide applicants with a copy of their N-400 for interview practice and also help students get copies of N-400s that were filled out by others. Students who have not yet submitted their N-400 should be reminded to request a copy of the application for their records.

Program administrators should advise teachers that under no conditions should they fill out the N-400 on behalf of students or tell students how to answer questions on the N-400 during their naturalization interview if they don't have a copy of the original. Then teachers should explain to students that consistency between written and oral responses to questions on the N-400 application is important because INS might suspect any discrepancies as evidence the applicant is not telling the complete truth.

Program administrators should work with their teachers and/or other staff on paid time to document and follow-up with student interview problems in coordination with larger cross-program efforts.

Program administrators should advise teachers that under no conditions should they fill out the N-400 on behalf of students or tell students how to answer questions on the N-400 during their naturalization interview if they don't have a copy of the original.

Program administrators should develop an individual professional development plan with each of their instructors and budget a line item to pay teachers for the time involved in such development. The plan may include paid attendance at workshops, coalition meetings, or conferences; materials development; observations of other teachers; or individual study to attain background information or increase their repertoire of instructional strategies. Administrators also should monitor relevant training opportunities, make teachers aware of them, and encourage participation.

Program administrators should develop a means to observe teacher performance to ensure that students get a change to develop relevant knowledge and acquire the language and literacy skills necessary to negotiate the INS interview. Such observations can be based on program quality standards (which should include a section on classroom teaching) and can involve self-assessments for teachers as well as administrators. Ideally trained professionals within or external to the organization should be available to provide coaching to teachers in need.

Technical Assistance Recommendations

ALRC could strengthen its technical assistance model by diversifying its professional development opportunities for teachers and volunteers, providing more flexible scheduling that includes evenings and weekends, soliciting more input from workshop participants regarding their needs and expectations prior to workshops, and promoting more widely the array of services and resources they offer including ESL training. We recognize that many options would also require a larger commitment of individual agency funding to staff development.

ALRC should encourage a perspective on staff training that involves hypotheses regarding what works in a particular classroom followed by field-testing and adjustments rather than definitive answers. Training should be viewed as an ongoing dialogue with programs that include follow-up sessions, rather than a short-term event. It should allow teachers to respond to questions and concerns as they arise from students while also giving teachers the tools for identifying varying student needs, so that their instructional strategies can be responsive to different student groups. In this way it can steadily improve teacher quality and programming. We recognize that this can be challenging with part-time teachers who often have a high level of turnover.

In order to meet the needs of all teachers, ALRC should regularly conduct a needs assessment of a broad range of citizenship programs, using measures such as focus groups, interviews of teachers and students, surveys, and classroom

Training should be viewed as an ongoing dialogue with programs that include follow-up sessions, rather than a short-term event.

observations. They should particularly target CBOs who do not currently use their services.

ALRC should expand its Web Page to make it a more comprehensive source of information for teachers and set up a fax network of providers who do not have access to the Internet to provide them with information posted. We recommend the following changes on their Web Page: (1) classify its contents, so that the site is identified when users type key words such as “Adult Learning Resource Center” and “citizenship education” on popular search engines; (2) post information about “red flag” issues and the restrictions of legal advice; (3) write a list of potential guest speakers that can be invited to citizenship classes; (4) post teacher job openings; (5) post basic test information including the 96 history and government questions and the dictation sentences; (6) summarize updates from ICIRR and INS CBO meetings; (7) post additional pedagogical information.

ALRC should set up a fax network of providers who do not have access to the Internet to provide them with information posted on the Web Page.

IDRP should provide information to programs on sources of funding that would allow them to make their sites accessible to people with disabilities.

IDRP should provide training and/or written information for teachers in identifying disabilities among diverse ethnic immigrant groups and requesting appropriate accommodations.

ALRC and ICIRR should jointly plan workshops to train teachers in how to identify potential “red flag” legal issues (such as arrests) that emerge in the classroom and to refer students to legal counsel. If implemented systematically, teacher screening can serve as an important additional layer of screening for those with potential legal problems.

Advocacy Recommendations

IDRP, together with ALRC, should collect and disseminate information on accommodations for applicants with learning disabilities. In addition, IDRP should provide assistance for test cases to apply for N-648 disability waivers based on learning disabilities.

Technical assistance providers, advocates, and program staff need to improve the coordinated effort to address applicants’ problems at the INS interview with simple paperwork and comprehensive follow-up that does not require teachers or other staff to volunteer extra time. The joint strategy then needs to be disseminated widely.

ALRC and ICIRR should jointly plan workshops to train teachers in how to identify potential “red flag” legal issues (such as arrests) that emerge in the classroom

Options for Responding to Concerns Expressed by Teachers in the Study:

Action research: Facilitate structured opportunities for teachers to explore concerns and jointly develop solutions

Access to practical ideas and theories without having to attend workshops: Organize and publish the many excellent ALRC activity worksheets and make them available to programs for a nominal charge as well as publishing them on the Internet. This is of interest not only to Illinois citizenship educators but also to those throughout the country.

Structured observation-feedback: Create a formal structure in which professional trainers and peers observe and evaluate classes in a non-punitive environment for both mentoring and coaching purposes.

Videos of effective teaching strategies: Videotape strong citizenship teachers modeling effective teaching strategies to be used as part of form training and also for independent learning.

Forum for detailed information sharing on instructional program design: Provide a forum for in-person presentations and newsletter articles, demonstrating all facets of program designs including strengths and challenges.

Program or project development: Provide opportunities for project-based learning through curriculum development or program revision that asks students to take a more active role in their learning.

Online Training: Provide opportunities for training via the Internet for those who work during normal ALRC business hours.

Web Page: Take advantage of ALRC's Citizenship Web Page as an exceptional resource. The Web Page should be expanded to include a wider range of resources including those promising practices and recommendations identified through this study. Other recommendations for the page included: teacher job announcements, best practices in different components of instruction, links to historical/civics photos and video clips, short videos of best practices in action, and assessment options.

Bulletin Board: Ask ALRC to post a citizenship educators "bulletin board" wherein teachers and administrators can freely share their particular problems, concerns, creative solutions, and successes. According to one teacher, "not only will this feature cultivate a cooperative mindset among administrators and

teachers; it will foster inter-agency communication, which will result in a higher level of services for the students of Illinois. It will also provide a sounding board for new teachers, as well as an opportunity for them to obtain information reflecting a broad base of experience.”

Funder Recommendations²⁹ (refers primarily to IDHS and the Fund for Immigrants and Refugees)

Require programs to have paid professional development for teachers.

Strongly encourage programs to set aside a certain percentage of funds for staff development. For example, ISBE currently requires federally funded adult literacy programs to set aside 5% for staff development. Programs who have experienced staff with high retention and therefore have a fund of experience to draw from should be able to commit fewer resources to professional development. Polish American Association, for example, has several citizenship teachers who were originally hired to teach ESL/Civics for SLIAG students ten years ago.

Fund ALRC to explore how their staff development activities impact instruction.

Fund technical assistance providers to review, field-test and recommend potential assessment for citizenship educators.

Fund technical assistance for program administrators in developing, managing, and evaluating quality citizenship education programs.

Provide funding for programs to obtain Internet access.

Fund the development of instructional materials that address the cultural and emotional issues related, not only to naturalization, but to civic participation as well. A special need in this regard are tools and strategies related to advocacy for oneself and for others. To offer examples that are accessible to students and to present role models from the community, the development of a video that students could watch repeatedly on their own or in groups would be particularly effective. Lesson plans for teachers and study guides for students should be included.

Take credit for having supported advocacy efforts vis-a-vis the INS. The lessons learned by Illinois on how to advocate for fair

The lessons learned by Illinois on how to advocate for fair INS testing should be promoted as a model across the United States through list-serve discussion groups of educators and immigration advocates

²⁹ Throughout the report “Funder Recommendations” relates primarily to IDHS and the Fund. The recommendations may also be relevant to naturalization education funders in Illinois and throughout the country.

INS testing³⁰ should be promoted as a model across the United States through list-serve discussion groups of educators and immigration advocates, newsletters, Web sites, and workshops and presentations at national meetings and conferences.

³⁰ Illinois has achieved more success than any other state in bringing educators and immigrant advocates to the table to jointly work for systematic changes in test administration policies.

IV. Program Design: Attributes of Effective Programs

Introduction

What Does it Take to Provide Effective Citizenship Education?

The research on program effectiveness suggests that successful programs share a number of attributes. While there is as yet no research indicating a strong relationship between these factors and learner outcomes (the true measure of effectiveness), there is nevertheless strong evidence that the following elements contribute to the success of education programs.

1. Program Vision, Goals, and Objectives
2. Needs Assessment
3. Outreach and Recruitment
4. Collaboration
5. Integrated, Comprehensive Model Linking Service Components
6. Intake and Initial Assessment
7. Assessment of Learner Progress and Skills Attainment
8. Support Services
9. Transition and Follow-up

1. Vision, Goals, and Objectives

Description

Vision, goals and objectives are related, but differ in their level of specificity and concreteness. A program's vision spells out the long range goal of an agency and guides administration and staff in their work. For example, a program vision statement might say "Serving immigrants in the xyz community by providing high quality citizenship preparation educational classes." Goals tend to be more specific, and it is easier to assess their success. In citizenship education, goals might include: (1) create awareness of the benefits of citizenship, (2) increase the number of successful applicants, and (3) foster civic engagement among immigrants or refugees from xyz countries or linguistic group. Objectives are still more specific and tend to encompass smaller instructional segments such as a course, a unit, or a lesson. They generally have observable outcomes associated with them. "In one year, 150 students (75% of the group) will successfully complete the citizenship preparation course. Successful completion will be defined by a passing score on a mock interview test."

While objectives cannot always be measured by standardized tests, there nevertheless should be evidence of success that the program can point to.

What it takes to be effective

A strong vision statement is the result of key staff discussing what difference the program can make and what it might focus on. Quite often, these statements are developed with input from others in the community who have ties to the population being served. Strong vision statements are broad enough and flexible enough so that different funding priorities can be taken into account. Goals and objectives need to be spelled out in sufficient detail so that achievement can be measured.

To be effective, vision statements, goals and objectives need to be aligned, each related to the others, and all should be reflected in the curriculum, the teaching approaches being selected, and the assessment measures being chosen. Staff development should be designed to help teachers meet the goals of the program and help learners attain the outcomes laid out in the learning objectives. While objectives cannot always be measured by standardized tests, there nevertheless should be evidence of success that the program can point to. For example, if a program has as its objective to increase the literacy and communication skills of 30 students so that they will be better prepared to pass the INS exam, evidence of learner progress toward such an objective can be gathered through mock interviews, practice tests on the 100 questions, and/or documentation of a student's ability to explain personal information requested on the N-400 citizenship application form.

2. Needs assessment

Description

A needs assessment is a process used to identify background information about the targeted learners that assists in the development of quality services designed to meet the needs of various learner groups, including those who are non-literate or learners with disabilities.

What It Takes to Be Effective

Effective needs assessments generally focus on two levels: (1) community needs, defined in collaboration with other agencies serving the same group or community and (2) client or learner needs, collected through demographic data, focus groups, interviews and surveys. Community needs assessment tend to focus on indicators such as employment and health issues, literacy and poverty rates, ethnic diversity, numbers of persons eligible to apply for naturalization and other socio-economic indicators. Client needs assessment tends to focus on targeted learner groups. Learner needs assessments may seek to establish

reasons the targeted learners want to naturalize, their oral and literacy proficiency in English and the native language, when and where learners could benefit from using English in their daily lives, and where they currently use the target language. Life circumstances (age, employment, child care issues) are often examined as well, along with any special factors (such as trauma) that might impede or contribute to success.

Needs assessments are often conducted before a program adds a new component to its services (a technology lab, for example). Effective needs assessments with limited English speaking populations require interviews and group discussions in the native language.

The strongest outreach and marketing has often come from other students who carry the message to their families and friends.

3. Outreach and Recruitment

Description

Outreach and recruitment are designed to identify potential students, informing them of the benefits of instruction, and inviting them to participate in the program. While outreach efforts may be fairly broad (such as public service announcements), recruitment efforts tend to be more targeted toward particular subpopulations (for example, toward the elderly, students who are new to literacy, those who are working, etc.). In some cases, program staff canvass households door-to-door to determine the need for special program components (such as English conversation sessions) or the appropriateness of a new class schedule (weekend classes, for example).

What It Takes to Be Effective

Outreach and recruitment to immigrants wanting or needing to become citizens should be both culturally and linguistically appropriate (e.g. provided in the native language, carried via ethnic media and individuals who are connected to potential students and the places where they gather). To be effective with individuals who are not literate, efforts must include visual and audio announcements and face-to-face meetings with potential students in places where they tend to gather. Such places might include churches, health departments, WIC programs, community centers or housing developments.

The strongest outreach and marketing has often come from other students who carry the message to their families and friends. On occasion, programs have involved satisfied students in more formal efforts, inviting them to join recruitment efforts. In some cases, programs invite groups of current students to create an orientation session for new students as a means to build language

and literacy skills while allowing them to make a contribution to the program and the community.

4. Collaboration

Description

Collaboration refers to groups of organizations working together to achieve a common goal. These might include coalitions as well as more informal working arrangements among groups or individuals with different areas of expertise: for example, citizenship education providers often collaborate with other direct service providers, technical assistance providers, advocacy groups, elected officials, INS, and volunteers to meet learners' educational, legal, application, and other special service needs.

What It Takes to Be Effective

A collaboration involving a citizenship education program is effective when it leads to more efficient or effective provision of services. Examples include educational programs collaborate with service providers that offer needed client services not available in-house, such as domestic violence counseling or application assistance. Programs might also collaborate with technical assistance providers to appropriately meet training needs. Collaboration in a coalition is necessary to form a joint advocacy agenda and also to increase effectiveness in accomplishing those goals. For example, INS is more likely to address a common problem if it is documented by a group made up of different organizations than it is to respond to concerns from an individual or a single agency. Likewise, elected officials are more responsive to groups, although they do have staff that will address individual cases as well. Another important kind of collaboration is with volunteers. They can serve a number of roles including speaking to students on topics of interest, e.g. civic participation or legal issues, or tutoring students in English conversation or interview practice.

5. Integrated, comprehensive model linking service components

Description

A comprehensive service model addresses student needs by integrating various service components such as ESL, citizenship preparation classes, mock interviews, case management, and application services. Such a model may also include services such as job searches, family counseling, academic advising or legal services.

A comprehensive service model addresses student needs by integrating various service components such as ESL, citizenship preparation classes, mock interviews, case management, and

What It Takes to Be Effective

An effective comprehensive model seeks to address all client needs: those identified during the needs assessment, as well as those that emerge as services are provided. Since learner needs are likely to go beyond the services that any one agency can offer, collaboration with and referrals to other service providers is often necessary. For citizenship education programs, comprehensiveness implies that students have access to educational and legal services, as well as to the support services needed to participate in programs. For students who face multiple barriers, access to services that deal with issues related to housing, health, and personal safety may need to be established as well.

Successful integration of service components requires a holistic approach to student services. Two key components are essential: (1) a client service plan that lays out the services offered to a given group of clients, and (2) joint planning by staff and regular communication between those who serve the same students to ensure that learning is reinforced through the various program components, and that key student needs are addressed. Most effective in that regard have been approaches where staff teams made up of teachers and tutors, advisors and others meet regularly to discuss what it takes to help individual clients to succeed.

A case management approach that seeks to meet students' social/psychological, educational, and legal needs can be highly effective. For example, a teacher might report on a depressed student's classroom involvement to a social worker providing counseling. Application services provide teachers with copies of individuals' N-400s for "realistic" interview practice and brief teachers on procedural changes in the interview. Teachers report to application providers any apparent "red flag" issues that emerge in class and advise program coordinators of any unusual student interview experiences.

6. Intake and Initial Assessment

Description

Intake and initial assessment are part of a process through which relevant background information about the student is collected. Intake is usually conducted when the student is enrolled. The initial assessment is carried out at the same time or right after. Multi-level programs use results from the initial assessment to place students in the appropriate levels. In citizenship education, assessment includes a determination of the potential student

literacy and English skills and their knowledge of history and government.

What It Takes to Be Effective

The initial intake interview needs to be in a supportive environment that makes the student feel welcome and comfortable. The process of collecting background information should not be intimidating. Intake information often includes name, address, permanent resident card number, date of entry into the U.S., native country, gender, age, formal education in native country, education in the U.S., date of arrival in U.S., emergency contact, medications, chronic medical or psychological problems, language(s) spoken, reason(s) for seeking to naturalize, work, and N-400 processing information.

The citizenship interview is essentially a test of ability to speak, read, and write in English within the particular context of the naturalization interview. As such, an effective language and literacy assessment can help the teacher understand at what level of proficiency the potential student's English reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills are relative to the demands of the test, as well as knowledge of U.S. history and government. It is also helpful to assess the native language reading and writing skills of students with limited formal education. The initial assessment is often continued through classroom observations. Quite often the teacher can designate the first weeks of class as a combination of teaching, observations, and assessment. Assessment activities can include giving students group or individual tasks such as mini-role plays and observing them as they interact with others in order to gauge strengths and weaknesses. It might also include sample learning activities.

7. Assessment of Learner Progress and Skills Attainment

Description

A progress assessment involves the use of an instrument to determine how much a student has learned from one point in time to another. These instruments can either consist of pre-post assessments or they can involve tools that allow teachers and learners to look back over time (through a portfolio approach, for example) to document the skills and strategies that have been attained.

The initial intake interview needs to be in a supportive environment that makes the student feel welcome and comfortable. The process of collecting background information should not be intimidating.

What It Takes to Be Effective

It is a truism in testing and assessment that no one tool can determine all that has been learned or capture the entire spectrum of progress that has been made. To be effective, assessment needs to “triangulate” results obtained from various tools so that a true picture of learner progress emerges. For example, effective assessments might include (1) learner self-assessments of what they have learned and what they can do that they couldn’t do before (“Can-Do” lists work well in that respect), (2) teacher observations of learners’ strengths and weaknesses, and (3) a test or a performance tasks that invite learners to demonstrate a skill (such as holding one’s own in an interview; presenting personal information in oral or written formats; calling an 800 number to get information or using the phone book to find a shop that does passport photos on the weekend). ED WANTS TO KNOW WHERE TEACHER CAN OBTAIN “CAN DO” lists

8. Support Services

Description

Support services are designed to meet many of a student’s non-educational needs. In citizenship education programs, many include the following: transportation; course materials; caseworker support; childcare; legal assistance with the N-400, N-648, change of address forms, petitions for family members; transportation and escort for fingerprinting and the INS interview; advocacy with INS on application or interview problems; mental and physical health services; support groups; counseling and advice on how to obtain public benefits; and other classes or services of interest to the learners.

What It Takes to Be Effective

Effective support services within or external to an agency make it possible for students to participate in classes and meet their educational goals. They are culturally and linguistically appropriate designed to remove barriers to education.

9. Transition and Follow-up

Description

Transition helps students who have successfully completed their citizenship class move to other appropriate classes or services. In some cases, transition refers to movement from one program component to another (such as moving from an ESL Citizenship class to a higher ESL class). In others instances transition might mean leaving one program setting, such as a CBO, to join a more

mainstream academic or training program, such as a community college.

What It Takes to Be Effective

Effective transition components are designed to facilitate transition for students for whom citizenship is not a final step. Since students' goals may include a wide range of plans (such as entering the workforce -or getting a better job, getting involved in the community, entering a vocational or academic program, or supporting the education of their children), collaboration with other service providers is needed.

Programs that have been successful in transitioning students tend to use a variety of approaches, including (1) goal setting activities that help students think about longer range plans; (2) counseling and advising regarding opportunities available to immigrants and refugees; (3) advocacy with other programs to reduce artificial barriers to participation (such as tests), (4) role models and peer support to build confidence and a sense of self-efficacy in students who are afraid they might not succeed.

Staff at Rock Valley College solicit student input when scheduling their classes. "Seek the students and ask where and when they would like to have classes to suit their needs," says Citizenship Coordinator Amy Massoth.

► Promising Practices

Illinois citizenship education programs have diverse and varied support services for citizenship education students. They include:

- Childcare for children and grandchildren
- Citizenship application assistance/workshops/follow-up services
- Information and referral
- Legal Assistance: family petitions, N-648 disability waivers
- ESL and citizenship tutoring home-based and in school
- Transportation reimbursement and van service
- Social activities, e.g. field trips, parties
- ESL classes/tutors
- Counseling/support groups/case management
- Workshops on issues of interest to students, e.g. parenting, crime prevention
- Escort/advocate to fingerprinting and interview

Staff at Rock Valley College solicit student input when scheduling their classes. "Seek the students and ask where and when they would like to have classes to suit their needs," says Citizenship Coordinator Amy Massoth.

Centro Cristo Rey's Berta Manzo emphasizes the importance of listening to students. "Get to know the students, what is most important to them, and what can help them become a citizen."

The Arab American Action Network recognizes the importance of providing on-site childcare and also of helping women care for their children during their INS interviews. According to citizenship teacher Saffiya Shilo, "Arab women take their children wherever they go. They would never leave their children with a neighbor and it's not an option to leave them with their husband."

Northeastern Illinois University's citizenship program conducts a comprehensive intake and assessment including collecting an English and native language writing sample. Over time, teachers give students regular quizzes and also collect additional writing samples to assess student progress.

Many programs reported using a mock interview as their primary method of assessing test readiness. CAALII recruits local university students to conduct mock interviews with students from its member agencies.

Illinois is rich in effective collaborations of organizations that serve geographical, ethnic, or other groupings of constituencies. Some existed prior to the availability of citizenship education funding while others formed as a result of encouragement from funders. By working together, these collaborations encourage sharing of effective practices and an efficient division of labor based on areas of expertise. Overall, it has led to higher quality and more comprehensive services. For instance, the 16 partner CBOs in CAALII have different resources and services. Those agencies without a particular service are linked to other service components available at partner agencies through the collaboration. CAALI member Centro Romero, for example, offers legal assistance consultation to other collaboration members.

HIAS-Chicago uses a case management model for its citizenship students addressing multiple needs. Their educational program has three tracks: an 8 week course for those with intermediate proficiency in English; bilingual tutoring for those with lower English levels and/or who are homebound; and interview preparation immediately prior to the scheduled interview. Volunteer teachers and tutors work with professional staff to identify possible student problems whether physical, psychological, economic or learning-related. If they note any difficulties while teaching they report them to HIAS staff for follow-up.

Many programs reported using a mock interview as their primary method of assessing test readiness. CAALI recruits local university students to conduct mock interviews with students from its member agencies.

At Erie Neighborhood House, the citizenship coordinators meet monthly with the teachers. At the meetings they review the progress of their students, share citizenship information and agency updates, discuss effective practices, and plan new activities. The teachers are also made aware of other activities at the agency and invited to participate as appropriate.

The Jewish Vocational Service (JVS) offers intensive pre-citizenship classes for seniors from the former Soviet Union. After they have reached an intermediate proficiency level in English, students are referred to HIAS-Chicago for citizenship preparation classes.

Pui Tak Center incorporates citizenship and civics into their general ESL classes to start preparing students for the test and the responsibilities of citizenship. According to administrator Sara Lau, "we teach citizenry for the first 30 minutes of all of our ESL classes. We incorporate personal information, holidays, current events, and voting. We want our students to be informed citizens. They may have to wait a long time to apply, but we want them to be ready."

El Centro de Educacion y Cultura combines their educational resources - ESL, Spanish ABE, and citizenship - in order to provide a continuum of services for those seeking to naturalize.

Chinese American Service League (CASL) offers a three level program that begins with bilingual English language development with a civics content and culminates in a test preparation class with a native English speaking teacher.

Many of the elder students at Korean American Senior Center (KASC) have had little formal education because the elders were school age while Korea was at war. As such, KASC has structured their test preparation program to include intensive English four mornings per week and citizenship test instruction on the corresponding afternoons. To complete the service package, KASC offers application and disability waiver assistance and provides an escort for applicants to attend the interview. Students are also screened for eligibility for other agency services. KASC keeps current on citizenship issues affecting elders through their membership in CLESE.

Illinois' citizenship education programs use diverse means to recruit students. These include ethnic media, talks to parents in public schools, flyers, church bulletins, networking with local organizations, word of mouth, community information meetings, newsletter on immigration issues, monthly calendar of service and events, and posters providing information about benefits.

Chinese American Service League (CASL) offers a three level program that begins with bilingual English language development with a civics content and culminates in a test.

Korean American Community Services recruits volunteers from the families of their vast network of clients. In Korean culture, people feel an obligation to return to the community center what was given to them. As a result they have a large and varied volunteer pool who perform integral functions within the citizenship education program.

Polish American Association has retained several citizenship teachers who were originally hired to teach ESL/Civics for SLIAG students ten years ago.

Many of the CBOs have been able to fill their classes with nominal recruitment efforts, because of the trusted relationship they already possessed with the targeted learners.

Concerns in Program Design

Few programs systematically measure English language development or civics knowledge. As a result, teachers do not have systematic access to data that demonstrates progress or identifies weaknesses for the benefit of the program, teacher, and students. Part of the problem is that there are no readily available tools for programs to measure student progress along a continuum from low English/low literacy to test readiness. As a result, most programs use a final mock interview as their only success measure; there is no measure of progress. While this works for many students, those who have weaker educational skills may sit through three or four classes without making noticeable progress based on this measure. Teachers can't often tell if the issue is that students are not learning or that the current success measure doesn't capture what they have learned.

A number of programs were challenged in serving students who sought classes shortly before they were scheduled to take the exam. These students absorbed a lot of the teachers' attention in regular classes. Even programs that provided interview review courses found they were generally insufficient preparation for those with weaker English skills. The issue of assessment and screening students for appropriateness was not mentioned by the many teachers and administrators concerned about how to serve this constituency.

Programs serving special needs populations were concerned about the limited educational options available to their constituents after becoming citizens and the need for specialized funding to continue to meet the educational needs of elderly and disabled constituencies.

At a number of programs, teachers were not considered an integral member of a naturalization service team. After teaching their class, they had little contact with other staff. Much of what they knew about the citizenship process was culled from their students alone.

Several administrators expressed a need for funding to provide civic involvement instruction to new citizens.

At a number of programs, teachers were not considered integral members of a naturalization service team. After teaching their class, they had little contact with other staff. Much of what they knew about the citizenship process was culled from their students alone. Most did have access to background information about their students that may be relevant to instruction such as post-traumatic distress. They were not trained to look for potential legal, disability, or learning problems, nor are they asked to report noted problems to staff or given resources to make referrals themselves. To make up for this gap, several teachers volunteered many hours on their own in an attempt to meet students' needs outside the infrastructure of the agency.

We questioned the effectiveness of programs that accept students regardless of English proficiency and do not provide special classes, tutoring or referrals to take additional ESL or literacy classes. We were told that through constant repetition of the class they should be able to learn. This assertion is not supported by research.

One teacher stated that failure to assess students initially for their English and literacy skills had led to ineffective instruction. She related that she had a student in her class for over a month before she figured out that she could not read and write either English or her native language. She had not been getting anything from the largely text-based class.

Program Design Recommendations

Program Recommendations

- All programs should have an initial, ongoing and final assessment of learners' progress in English and civics.

Technical Assistance Recommendations

- Technical assistance providers should provide information on funding for post-citizenship programs for general and special needs populations so that programs can offer transition services beyond citizenship. In some cases, programs might seek funding for transition classes to prepare students for the next program, e.g. training, pre-academic ESL, or in some cases civic participation.

Advocacy Recommendations

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- Advocates should work to open up educational and civic funding streams to the underserved and special needs populations served under IDHS and FIR citizenship funding.

Funder Recommendations

- Fund a targeted campaign to ethnic communities on the higher standards for oral English on the citizenship test and the importance of allowing sufficient time for preparation to meet these standards. The campaign should begin with a needs assessment to identify which communities most need this information.
- Fund ALRC to review, field-test potential assessments for citizenship education programs and then train teachers in how to administer them in-person or through technology.
- Fund the development of a standards framework that includes program quality standards, as well as content or curriculum standards. Content standards will outline what students need to know and be able to do in order to be prepared for the INS exam. Benchmarks should be developed that allow learners and teachers to see what student performance might look like at various levels so that students can be placed correctly and their progress assessed. Also included should be “opportunity to learn” standards that identify the learning opportunities that must be provided if hard-to-serve students are to succeed in making progress. Such a standards framework must be accompanied by training for administrators, teachers, and coalition/collaboration leaders, so that issues of content and implementation can be addressed.

V. Curriculum and Instruction: Components of Effective Citizenship Instruction

Introduction

Illinois has many hard-working, dedicated citizenship teachers. Many of them work long hours with their students to assure their success in passing the citizenship test. In addition, teachers spend hours trying to find innovative ways to teach their students. Many have written their own materials, often in their free time. Teachers celebrate their students' victories, but do not hesitate to continue to work with those learners who have failed. All in all, citizenship education teachers tend to be an unusually committed group of individuals who have become passionate about teaching citizenship.

"I passed the test in December but I come every time because I like Paul and I like to speak English. If I have any questions, I ask him."

One encounter illustrates the kind of respect students have for their citizenship teachers. At Interchurch Refugee and Immigration Ministries (IRIM), the students spontaneously started appreciating their teacher Paul Pagones at the beginning of a classroom observation. They said he is very patient and kind; he explains everything clearly and repeats when they don't understand, and they feel safe to ask him questions about anything they don't understand. One student said, "I passed the test in December, but I come every time because I like Paul and I like to speak English. If I have any questions, I ask him."

Components of Ideal Citizenship Instruction

Those involved in citizenship education know that preparing immigrants and refugees for citizenship is a challenging task for both teachers and learners. It requires efforts on various fronts, including preparing refugees and immigrants for the INS exam and building the skills necessary for civic involvement. Yet such preparation cannot be achieved effectively through mere memorization or skill and drill exercises. To be prepared for the exam, students need the opportunity to engage the material to be learned, to apply concepts and to develop a complex set of underlying skills that come into play in the exam. To make such learning possible, lessons will have to be clear and focused. All students, not just the more proficient ones, must get a chance to be active learners: to think, to gain meaning from print insofar as that required for the exam, and to express themselves. They will need many opportunities to learn and practice. If these conditions are met, students will not only be ready for the exam, but will gain the kinds of language and literacy skills that will help them thrive in an English speaking environment. It will also prepare them for further learning. Finally, citizenship education presents the opportunity to experience community and discuss the role

that immigrants and refugees can play in helping their communities thrive.

The following elements contribute to successful curriculum and instruction:

- A. Demystifying the Citizenship Process
- B. Preparing Students for the Citizenship Exam
 - 1. Teaching History and Civics Content
 - 2. The Oral Interview
 - a. Developing Speaking Skills
 - b. Developing Listening Skills
 - 3. Teaching the INS Dictation
 - 4. Developing Subskills (Grammar, Vocabulary, Pronunciation, and Punctuation Skills)
- C. Fostering Civic Engagement

A. Demystifying the Citizenship Process

Description

If students are to be prepared for citizenship, they will need awareness and understanding of both the goals of citizenship and the process by which it can be attained. Teachers play a unique role in clarifying this process.

What It Takes To Be Effective

Teachers are often a key source of information for students about the citizenship process. This intensive contact between teacher and student often leads to a dependence on the teacher for this information, dependence that needs to be mitigated if students are to take responsibility for managing the citizenship process on their own.

There are a wide variety of strategies for demystifying the citizenship process and creating both the required understanding and the necessary confidence. Such strategies include maintaining up-to-date information on INS procedures, including changes in local policies; having guest speakers (e.g., lawyer, BIA accredited representative, immigrant advocate in the classroom) to answer immigration questions; providing an overview of the process through a flow-chart or video tape; and taking a field trip to the INS office so that students become comfortable with the surroundings.

► Promising Practices

The promising practices listed in this chapter come from conversations with teachers and observations of a limited

number of classes. The examples cited are representative of program practices overall, but they do not capture the richness of ideas that Illinois citizenship teachers possess. Here are some examples:

World Relief-Chicago heard about rumors in the Bosnian community that elders would not be asked any hard questions and that INS adjudicators would be sympathetic to the hardship they had experienced. Educational staff dispelled these rumors through discussions in the classroom.

Charles Naguwa of Chinese Mutual Aid provided an in-depth explanation of each component of the interview and how it related to the overall practice prior to class review.

Several teachers shared with their classes experiences of students who had recently been called for their interviews including both successes and failures. In one class, a student who had just passed the test reported on his experiences.

Several teachers shared with their classes experiences of students who had recently been called for their interviews including both successes and failures. In one class, a student who had just passed the test reported on his experiences.

B. Preparing Students for the Citizenship Exam

1. Teaching History and Civics Content

Description

The INS citizenship test requires knowledge of U.S. history and civics as outlined in a list of 96 questions (formerly 100 questions).

What It Takes To Be Effective

Understanding and remembering the 96 INS questions requires that students be given the opportunity to develop background knowledge that will help them make sense of the questions and remember the answers. Helping students memorize a great deal of information demands instruction that allows learners to associate new ideas with what they already know (previous knowledge). Students need to become familiar enough with the ideas inherent in the 100 questions so they understand at least the basic concepts embedded in the questions and answers.

Memorization of the 100 questions is aided by association of ideas, including the use of mnemonic devices, and a great deal of practice on questions and answers. Memory is further strengthened through conversations about the topic at hand. Games such as “Concentration” or “Jeopardy,” where

individuals or teams enter in a contest, can engage students and help them remember key information.

True understanding of U.S. history and government requires a great deal more than mere memorization of questions. It demands that students engage in ideas, develop background knowledge, and make these ideas their own. It also requires that students become familiar with some of the basic concepts of democracy and understand the roles and responsibilities of citizenship. While these concepts might be difficult to understand in English, class sessions held in the native language can help build understanding for those who desire or need deeper knowledge

► Promising Practices

Students at the Deaf Adults Education Access Program (DAEAP) developed a play to illustrate the American Revolution. The play was then videotaped as an instructional tool for future instruction.

To begin a class on the Constitution, Delores Raya of Erie Neighborhood House related it to students' existing knowledge by asking them about the highest law of Christianity, i.e., the Bible. She explained a law as something that described what U.S. government considered sins that people could be punished for. The Constitution and the Bill of Rights were like the Old and New Testaments.

Nelson Choto of Northeastern Illinois University has students make associations between words such as civil war and Abraham Lincoln. Then he has students relate those words to words in their native language to aid in memorizing.

At IRIM, a student, Habiba Asamitja, excitedly shared with the class her method to memorize the 13 colonies. 1 M = Maryland, 2 Carolinas = North and South Carolina, 3 News= New York, New Jersey, and New Hampshire, 3 CPR= Connecticut, Pennsylvania, and Rhode Island. 3 VGD (very good dog) = Virginia, Georgia and Delaware.

2. The Oral Interview

The INS oral interview generally consists of questions related to small talk, the truth oath and the N-400 in addition to the civics content.

a. Developing Speaking Skills

Description

Oral English is necessary to answer the adjudicator's questions related to the truth oath, small talk, the N-400, U.S history and government, the oath of allegiance and related directions such as "sign and date here." It is an area in which the required proficiency level has increased in recent years.

What it takes to be effective

To successfully negotiate the interview, learners need to be able to understand what they are being asked and respond appropriately. Since the phrasing of the questions asked will not be predictable, students will not be able to rely on memorization, but will need to develop a set of oral communication skills that allows them to give spontaneous answers. These include being able to respond in whatever language one can muster, although the answer may not be grammatically correct; acting pleasant and employing a friendly tone; and using appropriate body language (including eye contact). Above all, successfully negotiating the interview requires confidence in one's own ability to hold a conversation around the N-400 questions, a confidence that comes with exposure to different kinds of questions and practice in giving appropriate answers.

► Promising Practice

In many mock interviews observed, teachers varied the ways questions were phrased from student to student.

b. Developing Listening Skills

Description

Listening skills are necessary to understand the directions given and the questions asked by the INS adjudicator. Listening skills are also an important component of the INS dictation. Since many INS examiners are non-native speakers of English, students will need a great deal of experience listening to different accents and to English spoken at different speeds.

What it takes to be effective

We know from research that effective listening is similar to effective reading. It requires that the learner attend to (1) the overall (or global) meaning of what is said in order to determine what is being asked and why (e.g., "oh, this is about my address") and (2) the specific meaning of particular words

("How long have you lived at this address?"). To respond appropriately, a listener must be able to take in the overall meaning of a message without panicking when an unknown word or phrase appears and must try to use context or background knowledge to guess at what is being said.

Since those new to English are unlikely to understand perfectly what examiners are saying, several things must happen. There needs to be a great deal of exposure to the kinds of questions the examiner is likely to ask, coupled with extensive practice in answering these questions in different ways. Learners must be given coping strategies that allow them to ask for clarification when they don't understand. Finally, students must learn to paraphrase what they have said when the examiner indicates that he does not understand what they are saying.

There needs to be a great deal of exposure to the kinds of questions the examiner is likely to ask, coupled with extensive practice in answering these questions in different ways.

► Promising Practices

Delores Raya of Erie Neighborhood House initially teaches students "100 Questions" by asking abbreviated questions such as "Who first president?" instead of "Who was the first president of the United States?." In this way students are trained to listen for key words rather than trying to understand every word.

In about two thirds of the classes observed, teachers conducted mock interviews with individual students.

Paul Pagones of IRIM came up with a clever strategy when students became confused by the similar questions, "Have you ever failed to pay your taxes?" and "Do you pay your taxes every year?." He told students to reply "I pay my taxes every year" regardless of how the question was phrased.

Jimmy Reyes of Instituto del Progreso Latino has students fill out an N-400 to familiarize them with the questions on the form.

The Jewish Vocational Service offers a specialized pre-citizenship class for elder Jews from the former Soviet Union that focuses on the speaking and listening English skills needed for the citizenship test.

3. Teaching the INS Dictation

Description

The INS dictation is one of the greatest barriers for many students, especially those with few years of formal education. The Chicago INS District Office has issued a list of 30 dictation

Paul Pagones of IRIM gives his classes dictation sentences and then has them work together to decide if what another student wrote on the board

sentences based on civics-related topics that are used in the interview and provide clear limits for test preparation.

What it takes to be effective

While dictation appears deceptively simple on the surface, successful completion of the exercise requires not only the ability to understand and store dictated sentences in the memory, it also requires sufficient language skills to regenerate these sentences in one's mind (since it is not possible to recreate a sentence accurately in a language one does not understand). Dictation furthermore requires the ability to write down what one hears in English, a competence not easily acquired by those who struggle with literacy.

Low literate students may need a great deal of practice in "initial literacy," the basic writing of words and phrases, followed by an understanding of how English sounds are represented by individual letters (phonemic awareness). In order to manage the dictation, students need to have a grasp of sub-skills (also known as enabling skills), such as grammar, spelling and punctuation so they can write the dictated sentences correctly. They also need to use these skills as they proofread and try to catch mistakes in the sentences they have written.

Luckily, in the Chicago office the dictated sentences are selected from a larger set of sentences that are known to students, making the task less taxing, since sentences can be memorized. Dictations remain daunting, nevertheless, for those new to literacy and those who have not yet learned to write well in English.

► Promising Practices

Justin Pahn of the Korean American Senior Center had one student write a dictated sentence on the board while other students wrote it on their papers. In this way, all students were involved in the dictation exercise.

Paul Pagones of IRIM gives his classes dictation sentences and then has them work together to decide if what another student wrote on the board is correct. He asks questions to facilitate their decisions, such as, "How many words are in this sentence?" At one point he wrote a dictated sentence on the board with numerous errors. Students enjoyed telling him how to correct the many errors.

Charles Naguwa of Chinese Mutual Aid encouraged his students to repeat what they heard in their minds before they set pen to paper and then to review their dictation for any errors after they

Students are likely to be at different levels of readiness when it comes to acquiring language rules such as grammar.

As a result, any given
explanation provided to the class is likely to be

had written it. He reviewed punctuation and capitalization rules to assist them in making corrections.

Delores Raya of Erie Neighborhood House dictated individual words, phrases, and entire sentences.

4.Developing Subskills (Grammar, Vocabulary, Pronunciation, and Punctuation Skills)

Description

Subskills play a limited but sometimes important role in test preparation. For example, if a learner answers a question accurately, but the INS adjudicator can't understand his pronunciation, he may fail the interview. A knowledge of grammar is useful to understand questions and the structure of the dictation sentences. Knowing punctuation rules comes into play when students must write the dictated sentences correctly.

What It Takes To Be Effective

The teaching of sub-skills is quite challenging. To start, students are likely to be at different levels of readiness when it comes to acquiring language rules such as grammar. As a result, any given explanation provided to the class is likely to be over the head of some students, while other students may already have acquired the rule being explained and no longer need explanations or practice. We know from research, that an overemphasis on sub-skills will often retard and inhibit the development of communication skills (since students are reluctant to communicate unless they are sure they know how to say things correctly).

Effective ways of teaching these sub-skills include providing examples for the class and then asking students to practice pronunciation, grammar or sentence structure individually, focusing on those items that they seem ready to learn. (For example, most beginning students will not be able to use present perfect or the passive voice correctly in English, no matter how often it is explained.) Another strategy consists of dividing activities into those that demand “fluency,” the ability to express oneself as best as one can, mistakes and all, and those that demand “accuracy” the correct use of grammar and spelling. It is generally agreed that language learners are able to focus on one element at a time (either fluency or accuracy), but not on both.

C. Fostering Civic Engagement

Description

Civic engagement is a concept with a wide range of meanings. Typically it relates to involvement in community ranging from voting to participating in a book club. Civic participation also involves students learning about and advocating for their rights ranging from returning defective merchandise to getting the school district to provide special services for a disabled child. In areas such as Illinois where citizenship classes are held in ethnic neighborhoods that often serve as linguistic ghettos, reaching out and making connections with other communities is an important part of participation in a multi-cultural society.

What It Takes To Be Effective

Encouraging learners to get to know others in the class and explore common interests is an effective way of introducing the idea of community. Encouraging members of a class to explore their neighborhood, list services important to them and discuss services that might be needed are others. Similarly, helping learners identify issues that they feel strongly about (e.g., children not achieving to their potential; crime in the streets; speeding cars or red light runners) can form the jumping off point for greater engagement, especially if these discussions become part of a community forum.

Cross-cultural comparisons of voting behaviors have worked as discussion starters on who votes and why and what difference voting can make. In some cases, activities that build civic pride, such as neighborhood gardens or participation in the census have been effective ways to move immigrants toward greater involvement.

► Promising Practices

Instituto del Progreso Latino (IPL) educates students about current events of interest and also invites them to go on rallies and lobbying trips. According to IPL Executive Director Maria Ayala, "The challenge is what issues that are of interest to the organization versus to the individual students. The problem is that there is not enough time to do much civic participation in the classes. Students are just trying to learn enough to pass the test. IPL is kicking off a civic participation initiative (independent of the classes) to get people organized, and to teach them self-advocacy in areas in which they have self-interest. Areas of interest include worker's rights, educational funding, community planning and advocacy. The problem is to make it action-oriented from the beginning and to encourage participation in relation to the issues they are facing. Students will hopefully learn what their issues are and develop the skills to help themselves."

here to the fullest exercising their rights but don't know how. Our students have been very isolated and as a result are interested in learning about everything."

Saffiya Shilo, Arab

American Action Network.

Mary Hogan of Albany Park Community Center gets her students to think about what participation means in their lives and to take action about what matters to them. One student who was concerned about a broken window at her children's school took pictures and sent them to both the Local School Council and to the Superintendent's office. She got swift action. Another student started a petition to get English classes at a local grammar school.

At the Arab American Action Network, Saffiya Shilo incorporates civic involvement into many aspects of her class. "They are refugees and don't see any chance of returning. They want to live here to the fullest exercising their rights but don't know how. Our students have been very isolated and as a result are interested in learning about everything. We focus on the needs of their children, neighborhood safety, cultural sensitivity, and other daily struggles."

Paul Pagones of IRM teaches students about the democratic process by regularly holding elections among students on topics such as when to end class, when to take a break, what to study, etc.

In a lesson on Martin Luther King, Jr., Fatima Borjanovic of World Relief-Chicago had her students answer the question, "What do you want to protest?" Their responses ranged from "I want my house back in Bosnia." to "I want a boyfriend."

Nelson Choto of the Chicago Teacher's Center relates authority and rights issues in the union grievance procedure to the INS officer-applicant relationship during the interview.

"We invite our students to participate in campaigns on community issues such as the census and public transportation access. We also talk about how to communicate with their elected officials." – Carlos Arango, Casa Aztlán

Curriculum and Instruction Concerns

Demystifying the Citizenship Process Concerns

Overall most teachers appeared to have a general sense of the citizenship process and were able to integrate that information into their teaching. However, we did have some concerns:

- In one class the teacher only focused on the "100 questions" and did not teach students the N-400 or other interview

questions at all. When asked about it, she responded that there wasn't enough time.

- Several teachers were confused about certain aspects of the citizenship process as they were not part of "information loops" on current practices.
- Few programs were aware of or used video or guest speakers as a tool in helping students see how the citizenship process worked or how they might negotiate the interview.

Preparing Students for the Citizenship Exam Concerns

We only saw one class that explicitly focused on English listening skills, even though they are the most used skills at the interview.

Teachers appeared to have varying information on how to assist students in memorizing content information. Questionable strategies included:

- stating information one time in English and then quizzing students on it;
- having students answer questions in the native language with no apparent English practice;
- having students repeat information in the same way over and over again with little or no content understanding. Those who were able to remember the answers were unable to respond if the question was phrased in any different way.

Dictation was integrated into most classes, however, only three teachers experimented with diverse instructional approaches to develop the necessary skills. In most classes observed, the teacher read a sentence and then a student or the teacher wrote it on the board. It appeared that the teacher assumed that other students could self-correct and alone determine which strategies to use to address their weaknesses.

Teachers also didn't address multi-level needs during dictation activities. Those students with weaker literacy skills participated in a limited way or not at all in dictation practice.

We saw punctuation explicitly addressed in only two classes and in one task were presented in an unusual manner. The teacher had students correct their papers by telling students in the native language how to spell words, how to capitalize and where to put punctuation marks. The sentences were not presented visually on the board.

The teachers did not appear to have a coherent strategy for what was and wasn't corrected. In one the teacher interrupted and repeated the correct pronunciation without any student practice. In the other, the teacher had the student repeat the word twice. Neither appeared to have any information on how to develop communicative competence nor the diversity of strategies that can be used to teach pronunciation.

We saw grammar addressed in two classes taught by non-native English speakers. In both classes students were told to answer questions in complete, grammatically correct sentences. Yet, if asked the same questions, a native English speaker would answer with one word or a short phrase.

Concerns in Fostering Civic Engagement

"There should be classes for new citizens. Vietnamese are wasting a lot of time and money at casinos because they have nothing meaningful to do with their lives. If you have a good teacher and know how to invite them, they will come."
– Tyler Pham, Vietnamese Association of Illinois

"Students don't really care about voting or public participation. They will go to rallies and sign petitions as a way of thanking us for providing them classes. Also, the language barrier keeps them isolated and timid."
– Zuong Nguyen, Vietnamese Association of Illinois

A number of programs were frustrated in their attempts to incorporate civic engagement into their existing citizenship classes.

"There should be classes for new citizens. Vietnamese are wasting a lot of time and money at casinos because they have nothing meaningful to do with their lives. If you have a good teacher and know how to invite them, they will come."
Tyler Pham, Vietnamese Association of Illinois

Curriculum and Instruction Recommendations

Technical Assistance Recommendations

- ALRC should provide information on effective instruction within all of the components of citizenship instruction in basic training and also on the Web Page along with sample activities.

Funder Recommendations

- Fund a demonstration project in civic engagement for new citizens and use the project as a research laboratory to explore what works with different populations. Include projects that incorporate civic engagement in existing naturalization programs those targeted to new citizens.

V. Managing the Teaching/Learning Process

Introduction

Citizenship instruction involves not only reviewing the components of the test but also managing instruction in the classroom. There are numerous issues related to classroom management. Some of those particularly important in citizenship instruction for hard-to-serve learners are the focus of this chapter: HEIDE CAN YOU ADD TO THIS INTRO

1. Lesson Planning
3. Offering Learner-Centered Classroom Management
4. Using the Native Language Effectively
5. Using Strategies in a Multi-Level Classroom
6. Addressing Disposition Factors
7. Promoting English Reading and Writing for Low Literacy Students
8. Learning How to Learn
9. Addressing Cultural Issues
10. Overcoming Limiting Mental and Physical Factors
11. Integrating Technology and Other Materials into the Curriculum

1. Lesson Planning

Description

A lesson plan is an outline for a particular lesson in a course. It lists the point of a lesson along with expected outcomes (what learners should know and be able to do as a result of the lesson). It outlines the sequence of activities, starting with an introductory task or a prompt, such as a short writing, a picture, song, or video clip. It lists the materials to be used, along with expected groupings (e.g., whole class, pair interactions or group work). Ideally, a lesson plan includes some form of assessment (formal or informal) which allows the teacher to see to what extent students understand the content and are able to use the skills and strategies taught. A lesson plan generally concludes with a brief discussion of how content and skills will be reinforced in future lessons.

Some lesson plans are more open-ended than others. While some specify each activity in detail and include materials to be used with the class, others simply state the general goal of the lessons and the approach to be used, allowing specific activities to emerge from the interaction with the class.

What It Takes To Be Effective

Effective lesson plans include an instructional sequence that builds from simple to complex and from the familiar to the new. Such plans often build on a needs assessment that seeks to capture information on what learners can do well and where they are having difficulties, and tries to connect what is being taught to learners' interests and goals.

Since ESL/Civics classes are likely to include a wide variety of students, lesson plans that work include activities suitable for a range of learning styles. Effective lesson plans also show the different contexts in which information and skills will be presented in order to account for different student interests. While open-ended lessons work well for experienced teachers who are able to "go with the flow" by drawing on a wide repertoire of instructional strategies, beginning teachers (and their students) are often better served by more detailed lesson plans that show how the planned activities will build on each other and how various skills interact and reinforce each other.

To help new teachers develop lesson plans that work, schools of education often ask teacher/trainees to design two sets of activities for each segment: one that should work (given what the teacher knows about the students), and a fall-back segment. These fall-back segments are designed for situations such as the following: (1) the students already know most of the information and need a greater challenge, (2) the students are having difficulties grasping the information or the skill being taught, or (3) the activity just does not "work," either because the set up is too complicated and students aren't grasping what they are supposed to do or students are very much bored and disengaged so that no learning is taking place.

At Association House, AmeriCorp volunteer Veronica Rodriguez worked with a lesson plan outline that had been developed by her supervisor, an experienced citizenship teacher. After each class she wrote up a report on what had been accomplished and reviewed it with her supervisor.

► Promising Practice

At Association House, AmeriCorp volunteer Veronica Rodriguez worked with a lesson plan outline that had been developed by her supervisor, an experienced citizenship teacher. After each class she wrote up a report on what had been accomplished and reviewed it with her supervisor.

2. Offering Learner-Centered Classroom Management

Description

Learner-centered teaching focuses on making information accessible to students by varying learning opportunities so they match the level of proficiency of the students.

What It Takes To Be Effective

In a well-managed learner-centered classroom, the teacher observes and listens to the students, makes hypotheses as to what will work for the group, tries out tasks and activities, observes the outcome and makes necessary adjustments. Simultaneously, she tries to observe individual students to see who needs extra help or who might benefit from greater challenges. Learner-centered ESL teaching also demands that students be given the opportunity to communicate with each other and share ideas. Other strategies include spending sufficient time on a task so that students can “get it” and encouraging multiple modes of learning, (see it, hear it, do it, touch it, write and read about it).

► Promising Practice

Delores Raya of Erie House does not proceed onto a new topic every student understands the content being taught. “I give those with less skill the most attention,” she says.

3. Using the Native Language Effectively

Description

In the language and literacy classroom, “native language” refers to the use of the students’ mother tongue. The native language can be used by a bilingual teacher or by students, even if the instructor is mono-lingual English speaking. In fact, in classrooms where a significant number of beginning ESL students all share the same language, it is very difficult to discourage the use of the mother tongue since using a language they understand allows students to ask questions, clarify instructions, explain the meanings of a concept to one another, and, most importantly, express themselves in their own words.

Sometimes entire class segments are taught in the native language to provide background information, obtain feedback, or elicit information as part of a needs assessment. Issues that students feel strongly about are often discussed in the native language as well, in order to allow students who have little proficiency in English to participate.

Native language literacy is also used for cultural transmission. Students are invited to tell their personal stories and recount their memories in the language that they are most comfortable in so

that these stories can be shared with family members or friends. This activity is often followed by a retelling in English so that the same information can be shared with others, such as English speaking grandchildren or immigrants from other language groups. Oral histories, where family members are interviewed and their experiences are retold in English are also an effective way to combine English and the native language while at the same time capturing and maintaining cultural traditions.

What it Takes to Be Effective

The native language can be a useful tool to build content knowledge, alleviate anxiety in the classroom, and explain concepts in learning English. However, since students must take the citizenship test in English (with the exception of those who are eligible for an exemption based on age and length of residency³¹ or disability³²) spending a significant amount of time on English language development is paramount if students are to succeed. In addition, since the standards for oral English in the Chicago INS District have significantly increased recently, students must get a chance to improve their communication skills.

INS requirements call for the strategic use of the native language within a civics class. Strategies that work include providing background information in the native language and then asking students to study key words and concepts in English. This can be followed by activities that engage students in creating questions and answers in English.

Another effective strategy involves a “review/preview method” in which teachers introduce a lesson in the native language in order to establish context. Then the teacher instructs the lesson in English, at the end switching back to the native language to check comprehension and answer questions.

Quite a few monolingual English speaking teachers have found that putting time aside during which students can discuss a topic in the native language or help each other is an effective way to provide cognitive assistance. These teachers then ask students to report back what was discussed in English, although they may have to struggle a bit with the explanations.

³¹ Applicants who are at least 50 years old and have been a permanent resident for at least 20 years at the time they complete their N-400 naturalization application or 55 years old and 15 years a permanent resident are eligible to take the test in their native language.

³² Applicants can request a waiver based on disability for the English and/or civics portions of the citizenship test. While they are often given together, it is possible to be exempt from the English but the civics component of the exam, e.g. a Deaf applicant fluent in his or her native sign language.

For students who are not literate in the native language, offering a literacy class in the mother tongue has been a highly successful way of building initial reading and writing skills before transitioning students to the ESL civics class. In some cases, native language literacy classes are offered concurrently with classes in English communication skills that use minimal literacy.

► Promising Practices

Fatima Borjanovic of WR-Chicago uses color-coded worksheets with translations into Bosnian and transliterated English. A color graphic illustrating the question(s) and short text completes the worksheet.

At Lao American Community Services, teacher Van Moni welcomed students with jokes in their native language. They injected humor and lightened the atmosphere-characteristics that promote learning.

Dale Pesmen at JVS uses her extensive knowledge of Russian to explain subtle meaning in vocabulary and also to contrast pronunciation in English and Russian.

Fatima Borjanovic of WR-Chicago had students translate a question to assure their understanding. She also gives mini-lectures on background history and government concepts in Bosnian before explaining it in English.

“We find it beneficial to first give our student history and civics of the USA in Russian and then in English.” – Sabina Pello, American Association of Jews from the former USSR

4. Using Strategies in a Multi-level classroom

Description

Multi-level in citizenship education refers to teaching a class of students who possess widely varying levels of English proficiency. Instruction is varied and seeks to meet different student needs in English reading, writing, listening and speaking. Multi-levels often result from a mismatch in skills between oral fluency and literacy. That is some students may have developed conversational skills in English, but lack literacy, and others, particularly those who have studied English previously, might be quite proficient in reading and writing, but have difficulties understanding spoken English or expressing their ideas. The most difficult teaching situations involve those where two very disparate groups of students are combined: those who have

strong educational backgrounds in their home countries and those who lack even basic education in the native language. Although both may be new to English, their needs are so different that teaching them in one class requires a tremendous amount of skill and experience.

What It Takes To Be Effective

To teach a multi-level class demands a learner-centered classroom where students can work on different tasks, geared to their level of proficiency. Asking students to work in pairs or small groups so that stronger students can take the lead and provide some modeling and coaching to others is also an effective way of dealing with different levels.

One of the most successful strategies consists of providing students with tasks that can be completed at varying degrees of competence. These can include activities such as asking questions of another student, writing a few sentences about oneself, describing a picture, or listening to a song and completing an accompanying sheet of lyrics from which different words have been deleted for different groups (for example, advanced students must listen for more difficult phrases, while beginning students only need to fill in key words).

► Promising Practice

Ewa Kulas of Polish American Association had her multi-level students participate in a series of large group, small group, and paired activities.

5. Addressing Disposition Factors

Description

Factors such as motivation, self-esteem, enthusiasm, and fear of ridicule are often referred to as “disposition factors.” These factors can be both positive (eagerness to learn, willingness to take risks) and negative (little confidence in one’s ability to learn). We know that positive factors contribute tremendously to both learning in general and second language acquisition in particular. Conversely, negative factors can act as significant barriers to learning.

Disposition factors play a significant role in citizenship education, since passing the citizenship exam constitutes a stressful situation with a high stakes outcome. We also know that the more challenges a student faces (because of low literacy skills, age, lack of experience with formal education, limited

English proficiency), the more important it becomes to offer a supportive atmosphere and create successful learning experiences.

What It Takes to Be Effective

Strategies for addressing disposition factors include sensitivity to students' needs, making students feel welcome and appreciated, demonstrating patience when students are confused and/or overwhelmed, and offering students opportunities to share their personal stories and voice their concerns. Activities that build a community of learners, such as group projects, the sharing of personal stories or joint decision-making (about a party, for example) have also been found to be successful. Invaluable in boosting the confidence of students is one-on-one support provided by peers, tutors and aides.

► Promising Practice

On the first day of class, Jewish Vocational Service teacher Dale Pesman tells students a story in English that uses numerous cognates from Russian. Then she has students try and guess the meaning of the story. She uses their success to remind students that they can learn English.

“Learn as much as you can about how your students see the world. Make them believe they are able to learn the information. Convey an attitude that they are welcome and they are worthy of becoming Americans. Foster a sense of community among the students. Let them teach about the lives they had in their country, and let them express what they will do in America.”— Maureen Philben, Deaf Adults Education Access Program

“Ask your students, why do you want to become a citizen? I will become a citizen and then...What will happen if you don't become a citizen? What do you need to do to become a citizen? Write down their goals and remind them about them as the class progresses. It's a continual challenge to get them to think beyond the present.” — Ana Barbosa, formerly with Erie Neighborhood House

“There is a need to show passion for life, hopefulness, so they can see the future.” — Tom Robb, formerly with the Bosnian and Herzegovinan American Community Center

“Learn as much as you can about how your students see the world. Make them believe they are able to learn the information. Convey an attitude that they are welcome and they are worthy of becoming Americans. Foster a sense of community among the students. Let them teach about the lives they had in their country, and let them express what they will do in America.”— Maureen Philben, Deaf Adults Education Access Program

6. Promoting English Reading and Writing for Low Literacy Students

Description

Reading and writing are needed to meet the requirements for the INS test, as students must read aloud for the INS adjudicator and write one or two dictated sentences. Reading and writing are also significant elements in processing information in English, learning to deal with functional literacy (forms, applications, signs, bills, instructions) and in expressing thoughts and ideas through notes, post cards, or personal stories.

What It Takes To Be Effective

For students who are literate in their native language, reading and writing in English often develop right along with listening and speaking skills. Their greatest challenge lies in understanding the vocabulary and sentence structure of English so that they can gain meaning from print (a form, a notice, or a story). These students often have little difficulty picking up literacy in English although many will need practice in writing down their own ideas since they may have come from a culture where writing is seen largely as copying, and/or most of the writing they have done was done as grammar practice.

For students without strong literacy skills in the native language, learning to read and write in English can be daunting. They may need extensive and explicit instruction in literacy or else they will fall behind their peers. Effective strategies for this group include a focus on environmental print (starting with signs and products with which the learners are familiar, such as McDonald's signs, Domino Pizza placards on cars, Coca Cola cans, STOP signs or no smoking symbols). This will allow them to build confidence in their own ability to interpret print. Asking students to bring in family pictures and photographs and using those as a starting point to introduce the print forms of familiar names and items has been a successful approach as well. This technique allows students to develop a sight word vocabulary and allows the teacher to introduce letters and sounds in a context that is highly familiar to students. Finally, phonics practice, structured around high frequency words, such as names of continents or countries has been an effective way for learners to map sounds to letters in English (Africa, America, and Canada provide such examples). On the other hand, extended practice with the alphabet (memorizing isolated sounds and letter names in sequence) has proven to be both frustrating and boring for many students.

Asking students to bring in family pictures and photographs and using those as a starting point to introduce the print forms of familiar names and items has been a successful approach. This technique allows students to develop a sight word vocabulary and allows the teacher to introduce letters and sounds in a context that is highly familiar to students.

► Promising Practice

Erie House teacher Delores Raya reviews basic phonics in early classes to assist students in reading printed text outside the classroom.

7. Learning How to Learn

Description

Learning how to learn refers to students' ability to transfer knowledge or skills from one context to another by using cognitive strategies related to information processing (sometimes referred to as "meaning making"). Cognition also includes ways of building background knowledge (by associating new ideas with familiar notions, for example) and activating such knowledge in an effort to make sense of new information being presented. For example, a student will have an easier time making sense of the concepts behind the word "census" if he thinks of what he knows about the census in his own country or tries to remember what he has heard about it from the news.

Research has shown that instruction in using cognitive strategies can help students learn. Such strategies might include making use of what one knows to help interpret new information (as in the census example above), inferring the meaning of a new word from context, focusing on key words, using visual information (pictures, graphs, maps) to help in meaning making, and retelling a story or summarizing what has been heard.

Learning how to learn also includes strategies commonly known as "study skills," such as different ways to organize information in a notebook, scheduling time for review before an exam, making flash cards to help remember words, and using learning resources such as picture dictionaries.

What It Takes to Be Effective

Students who have not been to school, have not studied for many years, or have limited concepts of how to learn, need explicit instruction in learning how to learn, e.g., knowing how to know what's important, using special strategies to remember important information, and taking advantage of learning resources such as dictionaries and textbooks. For citizenship students, in particular, some of the most effective techniques will be those that help them predict what might happen at the INS interview and then developing a set of strategies that allow them to manage the process.

► Promising Practice

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8. Addressing Cultural Issues

Description

Culture refers to a broad range of assumptions and practices that students bring to the classroom. These may vary by country, gender, economic class, education level and the particular individual experiences of the individual. Culture may also refer to explicit instruction in the customs and norms of U.S. culture. Quite often cultural factors, such as expectations of what it takes to learn another language or how a teacher is supposed to teach influence the learning process.

What It Takes to Be Effective

In ESL civics classes, teachers tend to be more successful when they try to learn about the culture of their students and the particular situation of individuals. This information is an important part of identifying learner strengths, sidestepping or gently addressing controversial issues. Knowing more about culture also helps the teacher to understand what might appear to initially be strange or different behavior on the part of students. Often knowledge of the student's native language, even a few words, can break down cultural barriers.

When teaching U.S. culture, it is helpful if the citizenship teacher presents the information with a sense of pride in the many wonderful things about the United States. At the same time, the teacher must take care to avoid arrogance by presenting everything in the U.S. as superior to the culture of other countries. In the final analysis, individuals should be allowed to come to their own conclusion about the value of distinct cultures and customs.

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Saffiya Shilo, Arab American Action Network

► Promising Practices

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Several administrators said that they provided a cultural orientation for teachers who were from a different culture than the students.

Several programs said that they found culturally appropriate rewards for winning games to be very effective as an incentive.

HIAS-Chicago begins every class with the pledge of allegiance and the 'Star Spangled Banner'. A teacher holds the U.S. flag while student recite the pledge and sing.

9. Overcoming Limiting Mental and Physical Factors

Description

Some students have a range of physical and mental problems, including those that affect their ability to learn effectively. These may include depression, preoccupation with personal problems, hearing and vision difficulties, and learning disabilities.

What It Takes to Be Effective

Strategies for dealing with mental and physical barriers that students face include the following: identifying the problem (with referrals to a specialist), getting expert intervention if appropriate, and making accommodations in the classroom to promote effective learning. For example, teachers can use materials written in large print for students who have vision problems or they can speak loudly and slowly to facilitate learning for students with hearing difficulties.

► Promising Practices

World Relief-Chicago finds that they are most successful at overcoming the emotional barriers of Bosnian elders if they start them in English class from the time they arrive in the U.S. If they start later, they are often more fearful and insecure about their ability to learn.

The classroom for the elderly at the Korean American Senior Center is located in a wheelchair accessible building. The classroom has good lighting, both overhead and natural light from the window, good acoustics, and a large board in the front of the classroom.

Tom Robb formerly of the Bosnian and Herzogovinian American Refugee Center (BHAAC) said they also allow time for many traumatized Bosnian refugees in their classes to cry before returning to the class content. In addition, he always carries a few pairs of extra reading glasses in his pocket for the many students with vision problems.

DAEAP offers a special class for Deaf who have limited to no sign language or formal language of any kind.

Nelson Choto of the Chicago Teacher's Center listens to students' problems during break and after class. He believes it has provided them with more confidence to return to their studies.

At the Polish American Association students often develop a network of friends among the elderly students. They often get together outside of class both to study and socialize.

10. Integrating Technology and Other Materials into the Curriculum

Description

Technology can refer to materials used in conventional classrooms (textbooks, posters, videos, slides, films, filmstrips, tape recorders), as well as to newer tools, such as colored overheads, digital images, and Web Pages. Computer-assisted instruction and various forms of distance learning are included in that definition as well.

More and more common are new forms of internet-based learning and communication, such as treasure hunts on the Web, visits to sites from the home country, and email communication with family, friends, and peers. Student-generated materials increasingly take advantage of the new technologies as well (e.g., some students post virtual visits to the local community on a Web site, prepare Power Point presentations, or create Web Pages that include pictures and stories of themselves, their friends, and their families.)

Integrating both low end and high end technologies into the ESL/Civics curriculum is one of the most effective ways of drawing students to a program and helping them to succeed.

What It Takes To Be Effective

Integrating both low end and high end technologies into the ESL/Civics curriculum is one of the most effective ways of drawing students to a program and helping them succeed. Visual materials, such as photographs that evoke experiences and videos that present a situation, are excellent starting points for language use that involves describing, telling, comparing, as well as learning and using new vocabulary. Posters and ads can be used to highlight issues related to anti-smoking messages or to presidential campaigns, for example. Graphics, such as timelines and flow charts, can visually represent processes that would be more difficult to grasp if they were explained solely in written form.

Video and audio are some of the most effective ways of building listening comprehension skills. Video, in particular is capable of showing language use in action, by allowing learners to see communicative exchanges between speakers. This gives students a chance to comment not only on what is being said (content), but how it is being said (tone and other non-verbal clues). It thus becomes a worthwhile tool not only for language acquisition, but for the development of cross-cultural awareness as well.

► Promising Practices

Justin Pahn of the Korean American Community Center showed his class various videotapes of the interview both in Korean and in English.

Nelson Choto of Northeastern's Chicago Teacher Center shows students a videotape from an old *Jay Leno Show* in which he asked people in the street citizenship test questions. The inability of U.S. citizens to answer the questions that many of the students know serves as a confidence booster.

Carol Garcia of DuPage Community College uses historical and civics videos to provide background information for her high level citizenship students.

Triton College has a computer-assisted citizenship preparation program available for student use in its computer lab.

Several programs have libraries of largely text-based citizenship materials available for use by their instructors.

Many programs and teachers have developed their own texts and materials focusing largely on the "100 questions" that work for their particular constituency. For example, CAALI sells at low-cost citizenship flash cards and a companion audiotape of the "100 questions". Chinese American Service League, Korean American Community Services, Korean American Senior Center, and the Indo-American Center, and World Relief-Chicago have each created their own bilingual text. HIAS-Chicago has created a textbook that combines citizenship test content with U.S. Jewish history and culture. Vietnamese Association of Illinois teacher Tyler Pham wrote bilingual color-coded materials for his students. For a more complete listing of locally developed materials, see ALRC's Web Page.

Nelson Choto of Northeastern's Chicago Teacher Center shows students a videotape from an old *Jay Leno Show* in which he asked people in the street citizenship test questions. The inability of U.S. citizens to answer the questions that many of the students know serves as a confidence booster.

Concerns in Managing the Teaching/Learning Process

Several teachers said it would be easier to teach vocabulary and complex terms if they had a package of still visuals or a video.

Several teachers expressed frustration with the English and/or literacy skills of their students. They did not see themselves as ESL teachers, but as citizenship teachers. If students did not have the requisite English for the test, they did not believe they should be expected to address this gap.

Teacher-reported approaches to low-literate instruction were very traditional proceeding from the alphabet, to sounds, to whole words. They didn't have information on other approaches to develop literacy.

We didn't observe any teachers reviewing cognitive strategies for "learning how to learn".

In five classrooms, teachers' only instructional materials were a blackboard and lists of the dictation sentences and civics questions. When asked about other materials, two teachers assumed that their programs had no instructional materials budget.

We observed two classrooms for elderly learners with poor acoustics and loud background noise from other activities at the agency.

The native language was not consistently used effectively in the classroom. In one class the teacher said everything in English and then immediately translated it so that learners never had to listen to English. In another class, instruction was only in the native language. When asked about English instruction for the test, the teacher said that her students were able to pass the test without explicit instruction.

CBOs often hire bilingual members of their community as instructors. Without these teachers, many reluctant learners would not attend class; however, many of them are not trained in ESL and adult teaching pedagogy.

We saw three teachers whose classes didn't show evidence of planning. The teachers jumped from one topic to another in a seemingly unorganized fashion. When students asked questions, the teachers were unprepared to answer them. When asked about planning, one teacher responded that he preferred to be spontaneous and respond to the students' needs as they emerged.

In one class the teacher went through her lesson plan without taking notice if students were "getting it". The students were

frustrated and at one point demanded that she review information that had not been clearly understood.

We saw few classes in which students were taught information through multiple modes of learning. The majority of classes were teacher centered with some group and individual mock interview practice.

We saw little use of strategies in multi-level classes. Teachers tended to aim at a middle level and ignore those with less proficiency in oral or written English. One teacher said he had told a low-literate that if she sat through several classes eventually she would “pick it up” contrary to research findings.

Recommendations in Managing the Teaching/Learning Process

Technical Assistance Recommendations

Technical assistance should be available to teachers who need sample activities that link theory and practice in citizenship education and provide examples for the different skill areas (interview, dictation, etc.). These samples should be adapted for different levels of proficiency and should include strategies for classroom management, including group discussions and pair activities. Such information can be provided at workshops and through the ALRC Web Page to support those teachers who want and need hands-on coaching. Packets of materials outlining creative and innovative ideas should also be made available for experienced teachers who are able to create lessons on their own if given some fresh ideas, and simply require some fresh ideas. This information could be available in the form of Digests on “Bright Ideas”, on the ALRC Web Page, or through videos that demonstrate learner-centered teaching techniques. In our interviews, several experienced teachers expressed their desire to access instructional strategies without mandatory attendance at workshops. One teacher said, “I have enough experience to understand a written explanation.”

Funder Recommendations

- Fund programs to purchase the needed hardware and software to enable teachers to create and adapt instructional materials on the computer. Fund the development of teaching materials that instructors can download and adapt for their classes.
- Fund the development and dissemination of materials that meet the needs of learners who have had few years of formal schooling and are not literate in their native language. These should include large pictures and visuals, as well as

photographs and charts that illustrate various aspects of citizenship.

- Fund the development of a video of best learner-centered instructional practices that includes demonstrations of how to manage a learner-centered classroom, develop English language skills for citizenship, and use the native language strategically.



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